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TRANSBAY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT

San Francisco Redevelopment Agency & San Francisco Planning Department

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Jacobs Macdonald Cityworks – Dowling Associates – Sedway Group – Urban Explorer – Wilbur Smith Associates

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October 2003

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP – Alfred Williams Consultancy LLC – BMS Design Group – Bosselmann
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THE VISION FOR TRANSBAY

Imagine a new neighborhood in the heart of San Francisco. Imagine a place for all ages, incomes and lifestyles, where people live along streets that are safe and inviting, easy and comfortable to get around on foot, bicycle or transit. Imagine tree-lined promenades and a new public park, framed by a new district of high-rise and low-rise buildings, of varying character and style. Imagine a place where shops, services and world-class transportation come together, where owning a car is a choice, not a necessity. Imagine a bold new neighborhood for San Francisco, a model for sustainable urban living, woven seamlessly into the fabric of the city.

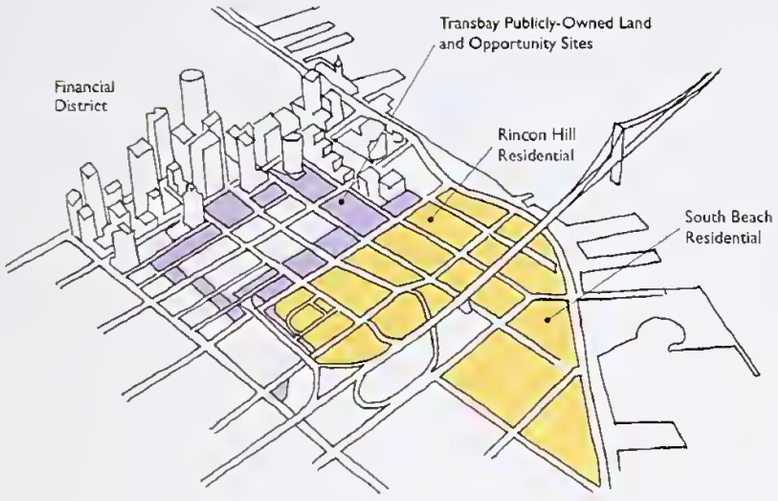
This is the future of Transbay.

Long a hodge-podge of office buildings, parking lots, and freeway overpasses, the Transbay area is poised for dramatic change. With the transformation of the Transbay Terminal, the city will create a major regional transit hub and build a vibrant new downtown neighborhood around it. It will be home to thousands of San Franciscans, to a range of businesses large and small, in a setting of gracious streets and public open spaces.

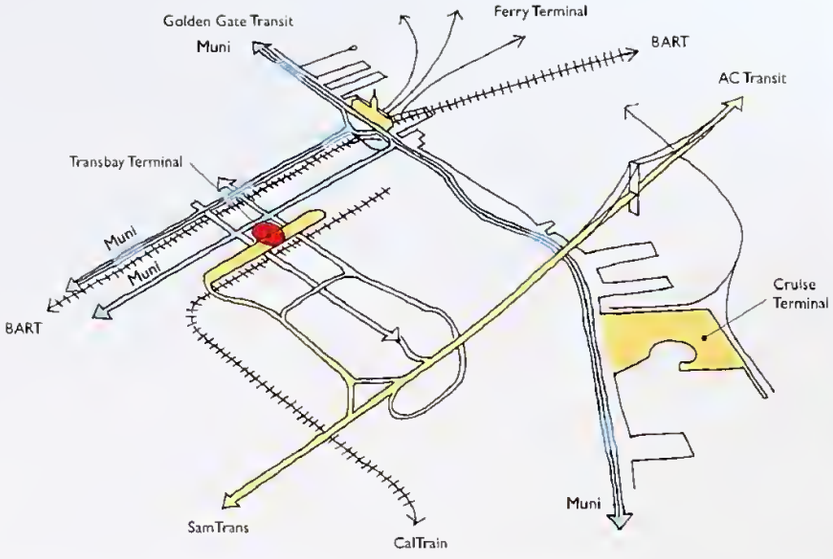
The vision for Transbay calls for a combination of public investments and private development, guided by a common vision, to transform Transbay into a dynamic, mixed-use neighborhood, anchored by the new Transbay Terminal:

- The new Transbay Terminal will be a focus for commuters and visitors to the city. Improved regional bus service, seamless connections to BART and Muni, and future Caltrain and high-speed rail will link all corners of the Bay Area and major west coast cities to downtown. A plaza and pavilion will face Mission Street, providing a grand civic space and entry to the Terminal.
- Mixed-use development, much of it residential, will circle the new Terminal to the south. To provide much-needed housing as part of a full service urban neighborhood will require subdividing irregular parcels of public land. New buildings will range in height from four to eight stories, with tall, slender towers carefully placed throughout the district, well-spaced to maintain public access to sunlight and views. Buildings will be constructed with best practices for sustainable design.
- Folsom Boulevard, a new public promenade lined with shops and services, will provide a heart for the civic life of both Transbay and Rincon Hill and will connect the neighborhood to the waterfront and Yerba Buena Center.
- Main, Beale and Spear Streets will be redesigned as pedestrian streets that link local residents to downtown and the new Terminal, providing extra-wide, tree-planted sidewalks, seating, and small open spaces. Individual townhouses will front these streets, with stoops, porches, and landscaping.
- A major public park just north of Folsom Boulevard will provide refuge from the hustle and bustle of downtown. Residences will front the park, much like Sydney Walton or South Park. An adjacent retail mews, that links the park to Folsom Boulevard, will provide shops and cafes for area residents and visitors.
- New buildings will fill in gaps in the historic district east of Second Street, mixing new housing, entertainment and other activities. Space under the bus ramps will be home to new alleys and recreational facilities for the neighborhood.
- North of the new Terminal, a landmark Transit Tower with a mix of uses will bring added vitality to the area and accentuate the city's skyline, marking the transition from downtown to the new Transbay/Rincon Hill neighborhood.

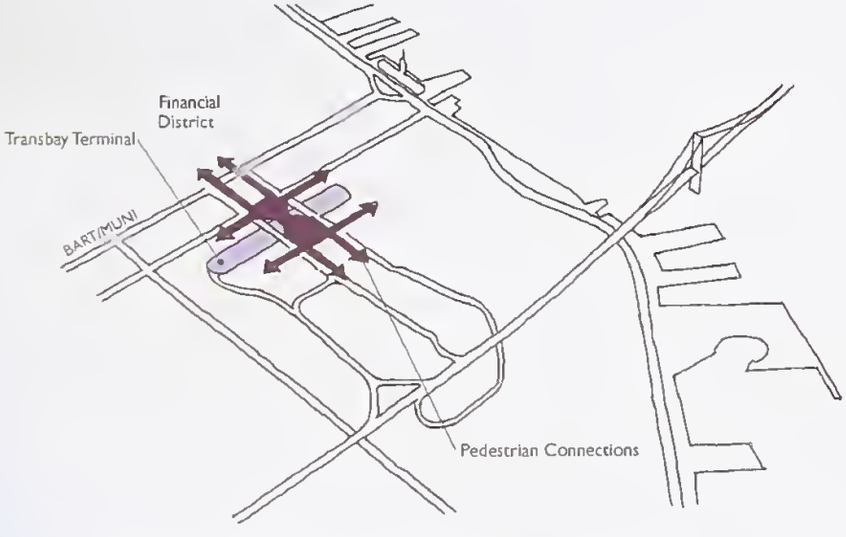
As we look forward, Transbay is an unparalleled opportunity for the future. Long simply a "pass through" on the way to somewhere else, the Transbay of tomorrow will be a vital new neighborhood in its own right, home to thousands of people, thriving shops and services, and a burgeoning new downtown community. With the implementation of the Design for Development, Transbay will be well on its way to becoming a dynamic new part of the city—a place any of us would be proud to call home.



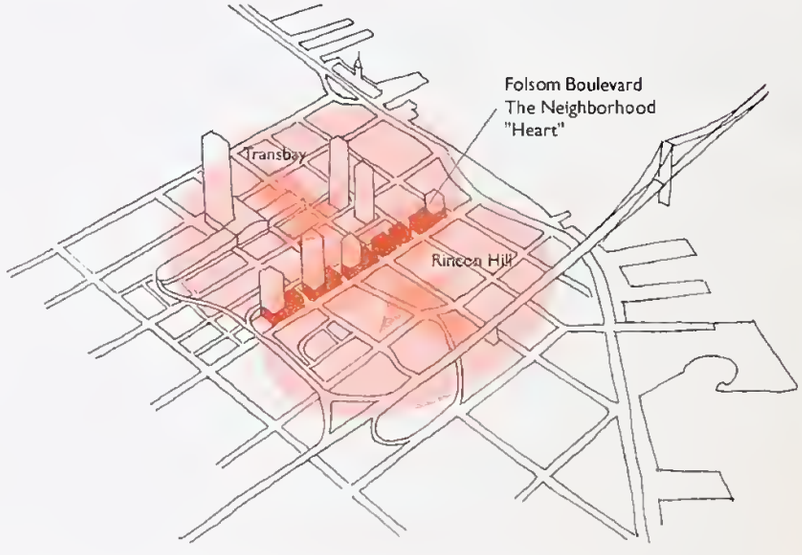
Framed by the Financial District and the Rincon Hill neighborhood, the Transbay area includes important public land that will be developed into a transit-oriented, mixed-use, commercial and residential neighborhood.



The new state-of-the-art, multi-modal Transbay Terminal will be the southern gateway to the Financial District, coalescing transit services from all points of the Bay Area in downtown San Francisco.

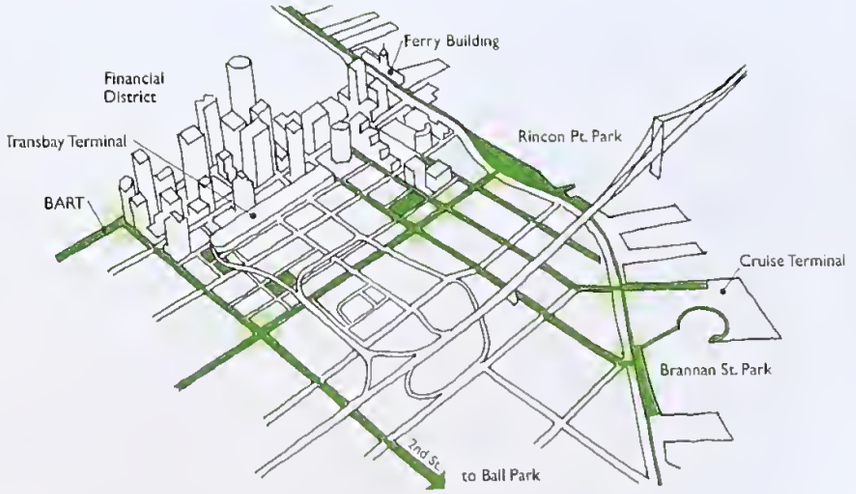


Enhanced pedestrian connections to and through the Transbay Terminal will facilitate access to transit and to surrounding neighborhoods and districts.

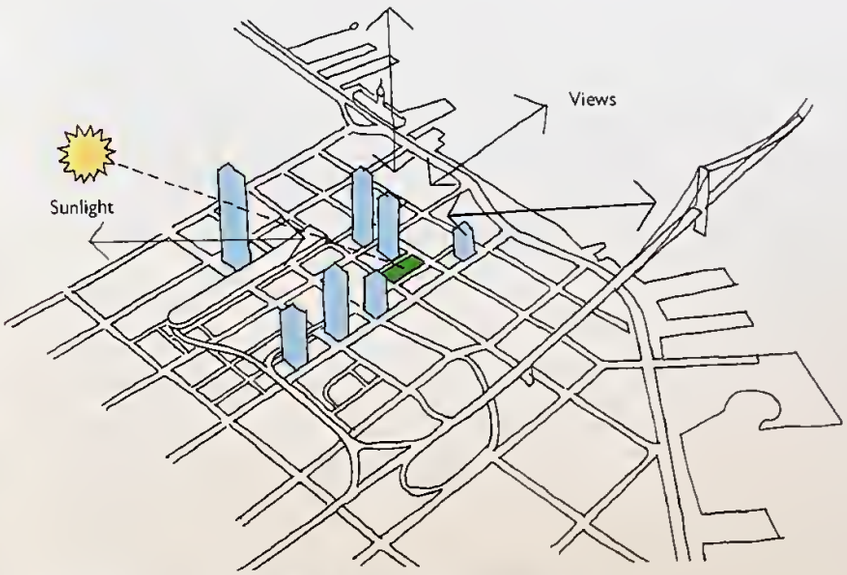


The "heart" of the neighborhood will be located on Folsom Street, where sidewalks will be widened, streetscape improvements will be added and convenience services and retail uses will be located.

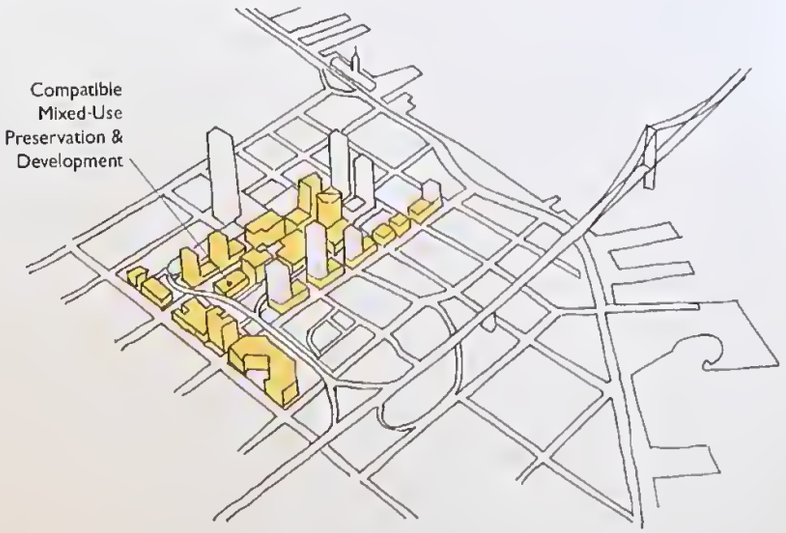
An active and attractive pedestrian environment will be created by expanding the existing public realm with new landscaped parks, pedestrian alleys, and widened sidewalks.



Improvements to the public realm of streets and alleys will create strong connections to the waterfront and other nearby San Francisco amenities.



Public access to views and sunlight will be preserved throughout the area by locating and spacing towers in such a way as to minimize their impact on open space and view corridors, and by requiring appropriate slenderness in new buildings.



A sense of urbanity and a connection to the past will be achieved by retaining older buildings, wherever possible, in the area of Second Street and by requiring compatible infill development in their vicinity.

The Transbay planning process has been rooted in simple objectives for creating a livable, high-density neighborhood in Transbay:

Objectives

- Ample open space
- An affordable, diverse range of housing
- Interesting and varied street experience
- Transportation choices
- Convenient shops and services
- Sunny parks and streets
- Transparency and views
- Environmentally-sound building design

The pedestrian experience will be improved with widened sidewalks, tree planting, and public open space.

Folsom Boulevard will become an active pedestrian realm with convenient shops and services.

Townhouse units, each with individual entrances, will face the new Transbay Square on all sides. The adjacent retail mews will provide the neighborhood with much-needed services.

A network of low-traffic streets, lined with townhouses and mixed-use infill development, will improve pedestrian circulation by breaking up the large South of Market blocks.

1 INTRODUCTION

DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT — WHAT IS IT?

This Transbay Design for Development document sets out a vision for future development within the proposed Transbay Redevelopment Project Area. The team of consultants, the Redevelopment Agency staff, and Planning Department staff (the Team) have developed the Design for Development, which includes frameworks for land use, for circulation and parking, for streetscape and open space, and for development within the Project Area. These frameworks address broad planning concerns, such as allowable land uses, maximum development, sidewalk improvements, and new public open spaces. The vision outlined in the Design for Development serves to provide consistency in urban design while allowing for architectural creativity.

Development Controls and Design Guidelines

While this Design for Development lays out the broad urban design and development program for the Project Area, more specific design standards and guidelines for private development supplement this document. These Development Controls and Design Guidelines prescribe, for example, maximum parking ratios; loading requirements; signage standards; retail space dimensions; ground floor residential design guidelines; private open space requirements; sustainable design standards; and will explore other architecture and urban design issues in the Project Area. These more specific design standards and guidelines have been developed through a public outreach process involving the Transbay Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and other interested community members.

Public Improvements

In addition to the development standards for private development included in the Development Controls and Design Guidelines, detailed specifications for public improvements will also be included in a Streetscape and Public Open Space Plan. This plan will determine the design of sidewalks, street lighting, street furniture, public parks, public plazas, and other improvements to enhance the livability, sustainability, and pedestrian orientation of the Project Area. While the Design for Development describes a broad plan for the Project Area, the Streetscape and Public Open Space Plan determines the specific types and design of public improvements that are an integral part of the redevelopment program.

The Transbay Area, just south of Downtown San Francisco, is the first glimpse of the city for East Bay commuters and visitors arriving via the Bay Bridge.

GOALS OF REDEVELOPMENT

The following goals for the Transbay Redevelopment Plan were established in conjunction with the Transbay Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and members of the community, at-large. The goals set forth the stated objectives that will direct the revitalization of the community. The Design for Development will guide the direction of all future development within the Transbay Project Area.

Goal 1 Create a distinctly livable, economically-diverse, urban community connected to downtown and the waterfront with well-designed streets, open space and retail areas.

Goal 2 Establish the area as both a gateway to the central city and a unique, transit-oriented neighborhood in San Francisco.

Goal 3 Create a pedestrian-oriented environment that encourages walking as a primary transportation mode within the Project Area, and where it is easy to meet people and to stroll safely, with leisure.

Goal 4 Develop a new downtown neighborhood to help address the city and regional housing crisis, support regional transit use, and provide financial support to the new Transbay Terminal and the Caltrain Downtown Extension.

Goal 5 Create a state-of-the-art, multi-modal facility that is an integral part of the surrounding commercial and residential neighborhood.

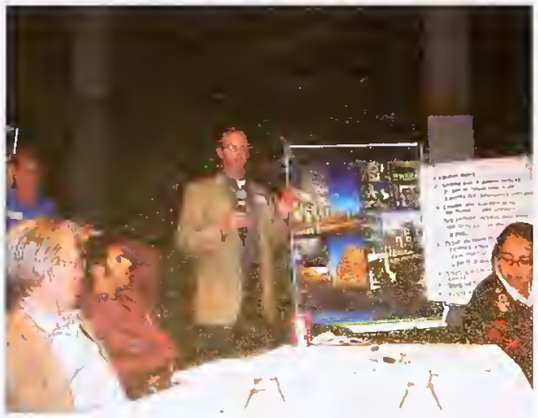
Goal 6 Encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation by future area residents, workers, and visitors, while accommodating public transit and auto ease for local and regional access.

Goal 7 Enhance the linkages between the new Transbay Terminal and the Financial District by creating a community with ample open space, shopping, and service facilities to meet the needs of its members and visitors.

THE PUBLIC PROCESS

Throughout the Transbay Design for Development process, the community had opportunities to provide substantive input and direction on the plan. The public input has been in the form of three public workshops, numerous public Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings, and several Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings held during 2003.

Members of the public were invited to the public workshops to provide input at every stage of the planning process. In order to attract the broadest possible participation at the workshops, approximately one thousand flyers were sent to organizations and individuals. In addition, e-mails and flyers were sent to citywide and neighborhood organizations with a potential interest in the project to distribute among their members and other interested parties. Some of the organizations that received mailings include: The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, Yerba Buena Alliance, the Transportation and Land Use Coalition, Urban Ecology, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, the Surface Transportation Policy Project, Bay Rail Alliance, San Francisco Organizing Project, Mission Economic Development Association, San Francisco Council of District Merchants Associations, Walk San Francisco, San Francisco Architectural Heritage, San Francisco Beautiful, San Francisco Tomorrow, San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association, California Center for Land Recycling, Senior Action Network, Housing Action Coalition, Transportation for Livable Communities, People on the Bus, Small Business Commission and the Urban Land Institute. Further advertisement for the workshop was posted on the UC Berkeley City and Regional Planning Department list server, as well as in the San Francisco Bay Guardian and the San Francisco Independent newspapers.



At the first public workshop, the Team introduced the public to the opportunities and constraints of the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area and offered some broad ideas and concepts for potential changes. Participants discussed the area in focus groups and offered opinions on the needs of the area from the perspective of residents, workers and visitors. To ensure that all participants would have full access to the presentations and focus groups, interpreters for Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish, and Tagalog were present at the meetings.

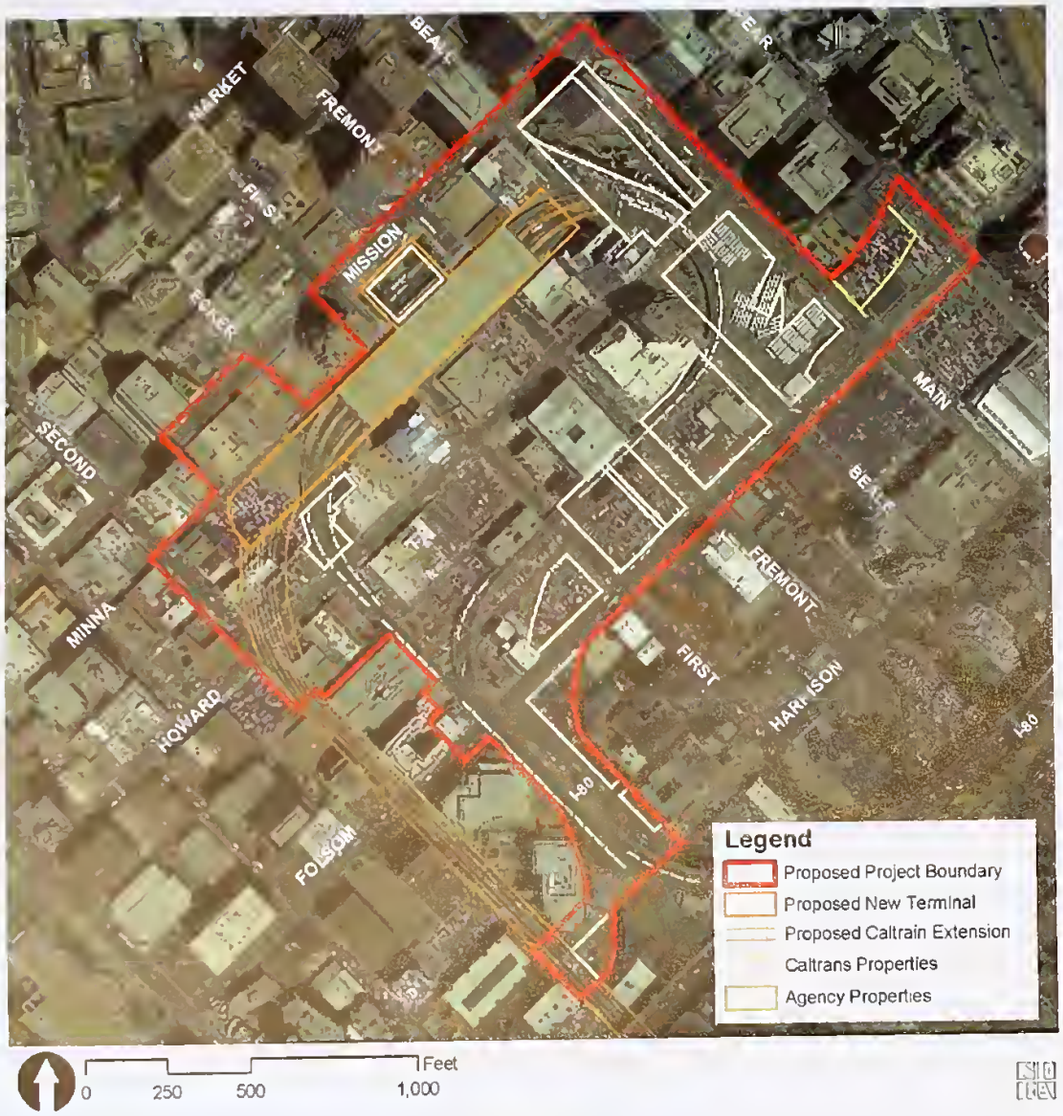
Based on this input, streetscape and open space improvements, as well as three development concepts, were generated. These concepts were then presented at the second workshop, where participants again met in focus groups to refine the concepts and to generate more specific recommendations for housing and commercial development as well as open space and streets. The Team used this input to generate a preferred streetscape, open space, and development concept.

At the final workshop, the Team presented the preferred concept, and participants again had the opportunity to provide input and refine the concept. The Team then incorporated the public input into the Draft Design for Development.

2 BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

A comprehensive planning approach, that builds on previous efforts to revitalize the Transbay area, will create a livable, high-density residential neighborhood of the highest quality.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Redevelopment Agency (the Agency) and the City and County of San Francisco (the City) have created this Design for Development to accompany the Redevelopment Plan for the Transbay Redevelopment Project Area (the Project). The purpose of the Redevelopment Plan is to eliminate blighting influences in the Project Area. The Project will encourage new private development and will facilitate the design and construction of the new Transbay Terminal and extend the Peninsula Corridor commuter rail line to Downtown San Francisco (Caltrain Extension).

The Project is part of an inter-agency effort involving the City, the San Francisco Planning Department (the Planning Department), the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB), and the Agency to develop a new multi-modal transit Terminal on the site of the existing Transbay Terminal and to extend Caltrain to an underground terminus beneath the new Terminal. An entity called the Transbay Joint Powers Authority (TJPA) and the JPB are taking the lead in planning, designing, and building the new Terminal and the Caltrain Extension, which will include the San Francisco station of the California High Speed Rail Project.

The Agency and the Planning Department are taking the lead in planning the future development in the Project Area surrounding the new Terminal. This development will contribute to the revitalization of the neighborhood and to the removal and reconstruction of the most significant blighting influence in the Project Area, the existing Transbay Terminal itself. Pursuant to an approved Cooperative Agreement with the California Transportation Authority (Caltrans), all land sale revenue and net tax increment generated by the development of

formerly state-owned parcels within the Project Area will be applied towards the costs associated with the construction and the design of the new Transbay Terminal and Caltrain Extension.

Future development within the Project Area has been the subject of a series of public workshops on the Transbay Design for Development. This extensive public process has enabled the Team to arrive at preferred frameworks for land use, urban form, streets, and public space within the Project Area.

PROJECT HISTORY

Since the 1930's the area has been dominated by regional transportation infrastructure associated with the Bay Bridge, such as the Terminal Separator Structure that had connected the Bridge to the Embarcadero Freeway, the Transbay Terminal, and the ramp structures that connect the Terminal to the Bridge. In 1989, however, the Loma Prieta earthquake caused extensive damage to this infrastructure and raised seismic concerns about the Terminal. As a result of quake-related damage, the Terminal Separator Structure and the Embarcadero Freeway were demolished, freeing up irregularly-shaped tracts of land which remain in public ownership today.

In 1994, the Board of Supervisors created the Transbay Terminal Redevelopment Survey Area (Survey Area). The Transbay Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed, and with community input, helped to create the 1996 Transbay 20/20 Concept Plan (20/20 Plan). This plan proposed locating a new Terminal between Main, Beale, Howard, and Folsom Streets and encouraged a mixed-use development within the surrounding area.

However, consensus eluded the Terminal location included in the 20/20 Plan, and a new process was undertaken, sponsored by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). That process resulted in the 2001 Transbay Terminal Improvement Plan (MTC Plan), which reached the following conclusions:

- The new Terminal would be located roughly on the existing Terminal site.
- The new Terminal would serve multiple regional and local bus lines, the terminus of the extension of Caltrain, and the possibility of a high-speed rail station.
- The new Terminal would be linked to the Bay Bridge via a single ramp.

The MTC Plan generated a broad consensus on the conceptual design of the new Terminal and Caltrain Extension. This new vision was incorporated into the Agency's planning efforts and since then, the inter-agency effort has been proceeding within the framework outlined by the MTC Plan. In 2002, the City published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/DEIR) covering the new Transbay Terminal, the Caltrain Extension, and a program level description for the redevelopment of the underutilized parcels in the Project Area.

At the end of 2002, the Agency, with the assistance of the Planning Department, assembled the Design for Development Team, led by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, to work with the community to create a land use and urban design program for the publicly-owned parcels in the Project Area. The Agency and the Planning Department staff have continued to work with the CAC and the larger community on all aspects of the Redevelopment Plan.

The Project Area boundary and the new Terminal footprint are shown in the diagram above.

The Team has had the opportunity to understand the Transbay Redevelopment Area as it was envisioned over the last ten years and to weigh the opportunities and constraints that the district faces today, by incorporating the analysis and development concepts from the previous consultant team, led by Simon Martin-Vegue Winkelstein Moris (SMWM), as well as from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and the CAC. With significant changes in the economy and with

multiple municipal projects underway in and around the Redevelopment Area, it has been especially important to coordinate the context and framework analysis with the EIS/EIR, with the South of Market, Downtown and Rincon Hill Plans, and with economic and demographic projections.

The Transbay Design for Development process is occurring within the context of a series of planning efforts that will have a lasting impact on San Francisco. As discussed above, the Design for Development process is working in concert with the TJPA's planning of the new Transbay Terminal and Caltrain Extension. The Agency is also working closely with the City to prepare the Final Environmental Impact Statement/Final Environmental Impact Report for the new Transbay Terminal and the Caltrain Extension.

PROJECT AREA BOUNDARY

The Project Area is roughly bounded by Mission Street on the north, Second Street on the west, Main Street on the east, and Folsom Street on the south. The area comprises approximately 40 acres between the Financial District, the Embarcadero, the Yerba Buena Center area, and Rincon Hill. The area currently includes a mix of light industrial, warehousing/distribution, commercial office uses and some residential buildings.

The Project Area includes a significant amount of publicly-owned land. After the completion of the new Terminal and Caltrain Extension and Caltrans' work on the West Bay Approach Project, much of this property will be available for development. In addition, one property within the Project Area is currently owned by the Agency.

As shown on the preceding aerial photo, the public parcels comprise the majority of the buildable sites in the Project Area; approximately 10.4 acres. Additional land acquisition will likely increase the amount of publicly-owned land in the area. The plans and recommendations that follow assume the full development potential within the Project Area will be realized.

Acreage Summary

Total Acreage within Project Area Boundary:	39.2 acres
Public Sites Available for Development:	10.4 acres

TERMINAL DESIGN

The new Transbay Terminal building will become the gateway through which thousands of Bay Area visitors and commuters enter the city. The Design for Development Plan and parcel development will be coordinated with the phasing and construction of the Terminal, scheduled to begin schematic design at the end of 2003, and its temporary replacement during the time of construction. Located on the existing site between Minna and Natoma Streets, the new Terminal will stretch from Beale Street to mid-block between First and Second Streets.

A new narrow, double-decker bus ramp will connect the Terminal to the Bay Bridge.

The current conceptual design for the Terminal proposes a welcoming, transparent building with multiple entrances onto the street to engage the pedestrian. The configuration of the Terminal and its relation to pedestrian and vehicular traffic are significant factors in determining the layout of the redevelopment of adjacent parcels and the development of design guidelines. Of equal importance is incorporating the Muni bus drop-off zone into the design of the Terminal Plaza at the main entrance of the Terminal (at Mission Street between Fremont and First Streets). The sidewalk and alley way treatment, as well as the pedestrian access around Muni's boarding area (positioned at ground level between Fremont and Beale Streets), is addressed in the design guidelines. Refer to the Terminal Hub Chapter for a thorough review of the Design for Development's Terminal treatment.

During construction, a temporary terminal, located on the block bordered by Howard, Folsom, Beale and Main Streets, will serve current users.

Estimated Transbay Terminal Schedule

2004: Terminal design and permitting begins

2005–2006: Temporary Terminal construction

2008: Terminal and ramp construction begins

2007–2009: Construction of Caltrain Extension

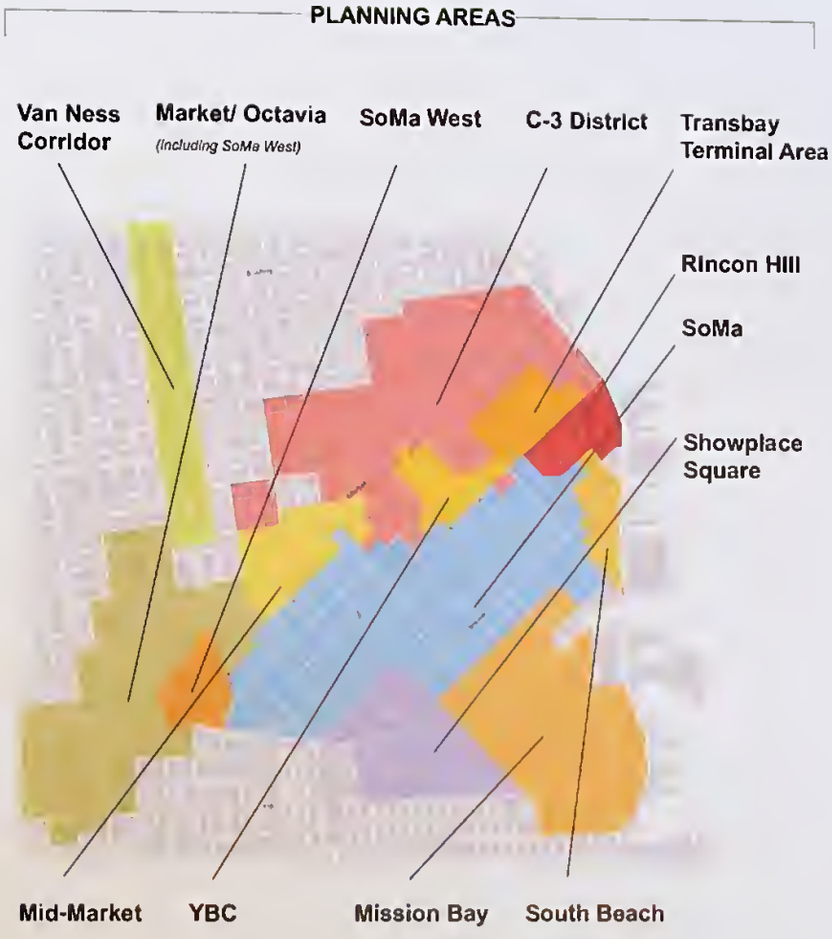
2011: Move into new Terminal

RELATIONSHIP TO ADJACENT DISTRICTS

Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative

The City's Planning Department has launched a new planning effort for downtown San Francisco. One pillar of the San Francisco's Citywide Action Plan, the Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative (DNI) will provide a comprehensive strategy for strengthening the vitality of the downtown by encouraging dramatic new housing production and creating balanced, livable neighborhoods in and around the downtown core. The overall goal for this initiative is to enable the creation of "whole neighborhoods," akin to San Francisco's most beloved neighborhoods, with a gracious public realm, transportation options, and a full range of community services. This effort seeks to provide an overall unifying framework for the ongoing and recent localized neighborhood planning efforts by the Planning Department, including Market/Octavia Plan as part of the Better Neighborhoods Program; South of Market (SoMa) and Showplace Square as part of the Eastern Neighborhoods rezoning; Rincon Hill rezoning; and by the Agency in Transbay, Rincon Point-South Beach, Mission Bay, Yerba Buena Center, the Sixth Street Corridor and Mid-Market. The DNI will weave these projects together, including the remainder of the C-3 core districts.

In total, areas within the DNI have the potential for over 40,000 new housing units. It is important that this housing be holistically accompanied by public and private improvements to create true neighborhoods. They should not become unsupported "warehouses for people" in areas previously occupied by commercial and industrial space and bereft of necessary residential amenities.



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

The Transbay Redevelopment Area is the gateway to the city from the East Bay, surrounded by the Downtown Financial District (C-3), Rincon Hill, South Beach, South Park, and Yerba Buena.
Source: San Francisco Planning Department

To this end, the DNI will propose:

1. Systemic changes to the street, circulation, and transit systems, in order to create a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly area that supports the City's Transit First policy and residential uses;
2. New open space opportunities and strategies for utilizing public rights-of-way as usable civic space in an area generally deficient in open space;
3. Urban form recommendations, including building height limits (based in part on citywide skyline and public view analysis and localized concerns for shadowing of streets and open spaces); bulk; tower separation (where towers are present); appropriate form for alleyways; and design guidelines that ensure a rich pedestrian realm and show sensitivity towards historic resources;
4. Siting and provision of necessary community facilities;
5. Planning Code and policy recommendations that ensure the creation of a diverse housing mix, in terms of affordability and unit size, in addition to a wide range of supporting uses;
6. Public benefit requirements of private development that contribute to and help implement public realm improvements and community facilities.

Rincon Hill Neighborhood Plan

Within the framework of the DNI, the Planning Department is proposing to rezone the Rincon Hill area, which is Transbay's prominent neighbor to the southeast, and to update the Rincon Hill Area Plan of the General Plan, in order to include specific streetscape and open space proposals. This current planning effort is being coordinated with the Transbay Design for Development. Together, the two will establish a comprehensive plan that creates a dynamic, high-density downtown residential neighborhood, utilizing Folsom Boulevard as the seam and neighborhood commercial heart.

The planning controls being considered not only regulate new development; they will also increase private development to a level substantial enough to support an attractive and engaging public realm of streets and open spaces, and a variety of housing types that meets the needs of San Francisco's diverse work force (including families with children). New development will provide easy access to shops and services and will enhance the area's livability. The urban form envisioned for the Rincon Hill neighborhood is similar to that of the Transbay Area: buildings up to 85 feet in height, punctuated by slender, high-rise residential towers, spaced to allow sunlight to streets and to maintain an airy feeling to the skyline. The planning controls will carefully consider appropriate controls for towers, including separation, bulk, and overall density throughout the district. Individual entries with front stoops to lower-floor townhouse-style, residential units will line the north/south streets. Pedestrian-oriented, ground floor retail will be concentrated along Folsom Boulevard. On-site parking will be located completely below grade. Enhanced by this pattern of active residential entries with landscaped setbacks, Beale, Main, and Spear Streets will be improved as "living streets," with reduced traffic lanes and significantly widened sidewalks, featuring usable open spaces. The draft planning controls for Rincon Hill are currently in public discussion, and the draft Environmental Impact Report is being completed.

The Agency is coordinating its efforts with those of the Planning Department, and Planning Department staff members are fully involved in the Transbay Design for Development process. Work on the Transbay Design for Development will inform future rezoning in the downtown area.

PART ONE – PLAN ELEMENTS

3 LAND USE FRAMEWORK

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

Transbay presents a rare opportunity to take advantage of surplus public land adjacent to the region's transit hub to enhance and weave together a vibrant downtown, an active historic and cultural district, blossoming residential neighborhoods, and the waterfront.

Public parcels, currently serving as parking lots, comprise much of the Transbay Area. They will be developed with housing and neighborhood-serving retail at the ground level.

San Francisco's South of Market (in foreground) and Financial District (in background)

BACKGROUND

Situated just south of San Francisco's downtown Financial District, east of Yerba Buena, north of Rincon Hill and South Beach, and west of the Embarcadero, the Transbay area has the potential to become an active, livable neighborhood that links these adjacent districts and provides San Francisco with much needed housing. As yet, however, this potential has gone unmet. The Transbay Project Area is currently zoned as Downtown Commercial Districts (C-3-O, C-3-O (SD), C-3-S) and Public Use Districts (P). Though some industrial and residential sites are scattered along the Second Street boundary, the area is primarily comprised of surface parking lots, low-rise warehouse/office development and mid- to high-rise office buildings along Mission Street (See Exhibit 3.1). However, more prominent than any of the buildings types are the overpasses and on-off-ramps leading to and from the Bay Bridge.

Opportunities

- Creation of a full-service, high-density residential neighborhood with public amenities.
- Sustainable transit-oriented development.

EXHIBIT 3.1

EXISTING LAND USES
TERMINAL
PRIMARILY COMMERCIAL
PRIMARILY RESIDENTIAL
SURFACE PARKING
INDUSTRIAL
PROJECT AREA BOUNDARY
0 100 500
N
FERRY BUILDING
RINCON PARK
BAY BRIDGE
STEUART ST
MARKET ST
STEVENSON ST
JESSIE ST
MISSION ST
ANNA LN
SHAW ALY
ANTHONY ST
NATOMA ST
HOWARD ST
TEHAMA ST
CLEMENTINA ST
ECKER ALY
FOLSOM ST
GUY PLACE
LANSING ST
1ST ST
HARRISON ST
ESSEX ST
2ND ST
3RD ST
HAWTHORNE ST
BRYANT ST
BRANNAN ST
SPEAR ST
MAIN ST
BEALE ST
FREMONT ST
THE EMBARCADERO
SAN FRANCISCO BAY

High-Density Residential Neighborhood

In order to meet the city's current and future housing needs, San Francisco must use its remaining undeveloped land wisely. As the Goals for Redevelopment highlighted, the Transbay Area is the perfect place to achieve high-density development because it is immediately adjacent to downtown and numerous residential neighborhoods. Dense residential development in the area can take advantage of the proximity to the Transbay Terminal, the transit hub for the region. More than simply providing an abundance of residential units, the neighborhood must offer all the amenities that urban neighborhoods do, and most importantly, it must offer a convenient lifestyle that will attract a wide range of people.

Sustainable Transit-Oriented Development

The proximity of the district to the new, multi-modal Transbay Terminal provides a foundation for the new development. Easy access to public transit, to safe, walkable streets, and to car-sharing services can further support the district's sustainability. With careful attention to streetscape improvements, rooftop treatment and green building technology, the Transbay Redevelopment Area can serve as a model of best practices for other new development throughout the Bay Area and the rest of the nation. These sustainable techniques and objectives are integrated throughout the Design for Development's requirements.

Issues and Constraints

- Pipeline Projects
- Historic and Cultural Sites

Pipeline Projects

Numerous projects are planned for sites within and adjacent to the Transbay Project Area. While it is possible that some of these projects may be placed on hold due to current market demands, land entitlements for many sites have already been granted by the City. Unfortunately, because they were conceived prior to having a comprehensive vision in place, the density and building configurations of many of these projects have continued to create a "downtown wall" effect on the city's skyline. This "wall" reduces views and sunlight to and from the Bay Bridge, the waterfront and downtown neighborhoods, and it creates an unattractive skyline.

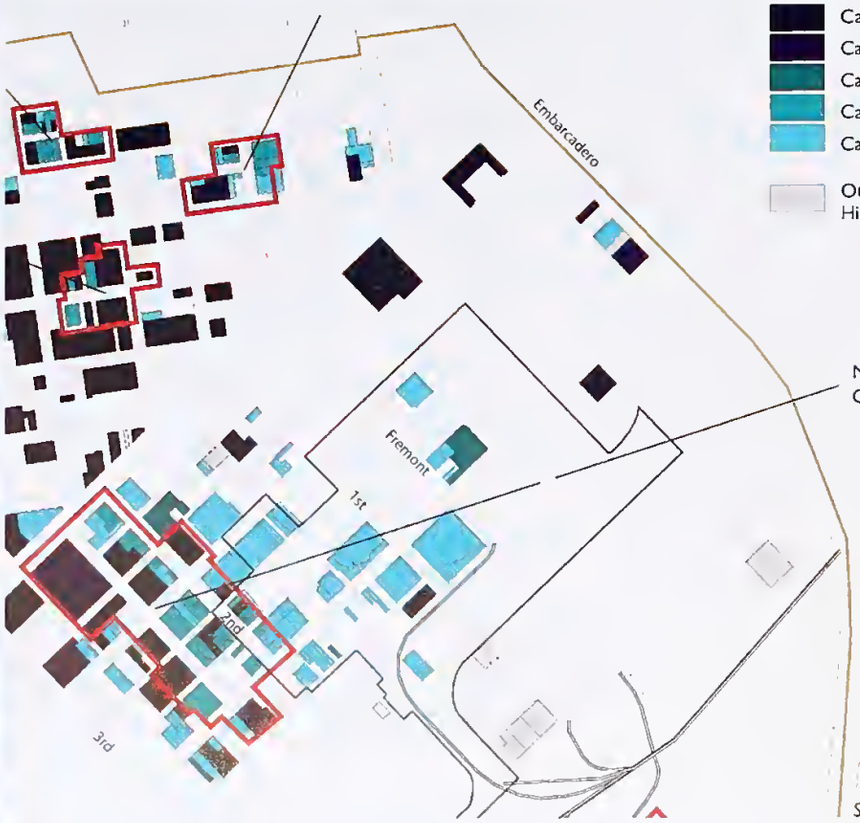
In addition, other recently developed low-rise, low-density office space has underutilized prime locations with large floorplates. Because these projects were approved prior to the Design for Development process, they may exacerbate many of the urban form and skyline impacts of downtown buildings that this vision document seeks to address.

Newly developed commercial, ground floor space around the Transbay area has remained empty due to the blighting conditions that exist in the Project Area. Realistic space requirements and locations for retail and public amenities are determined in the Design for Development Guidelines to ensure that future development corresponds to existing and future market conditions and does not create unusable space.

Recent development in the Transbay area is in the form of low-density, large footprint office space.

Historic buildings, such as these at Howard and Minna Streets (top) and all along Second Street (bottom), give the area a unique character.

HISTORIC RESOURCES IN DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS



LEGEND

- Category I Building
- Category II Building
- Category III Building
- Category IV Building
- Category V Building
- Other Unreinforced Masonry Building Historic District

Source: SF Planning Department.

Historic and Cultural Sites

The area around Second and Natoma Streets has long been protected by the New Montgomery Second Street Conservation District, established in the City's General Plan. In addition, the Second and Howard Streets District is a National Register historic district which is almost entirely surrounded by the Conservation District (see plan above and Exhibit 3.7). Sensitively acknowledging these districts is imperative to the success of the Redevelopment Plan.

The proposed underground Caltrain Extension is especially important because the construction of the subway may result in the demolition of three classified historic buildings as well as multiple other buildings with historic qualities. Careful attention to the buildings on affected parcels will be crucial to maintaining the character of the district.

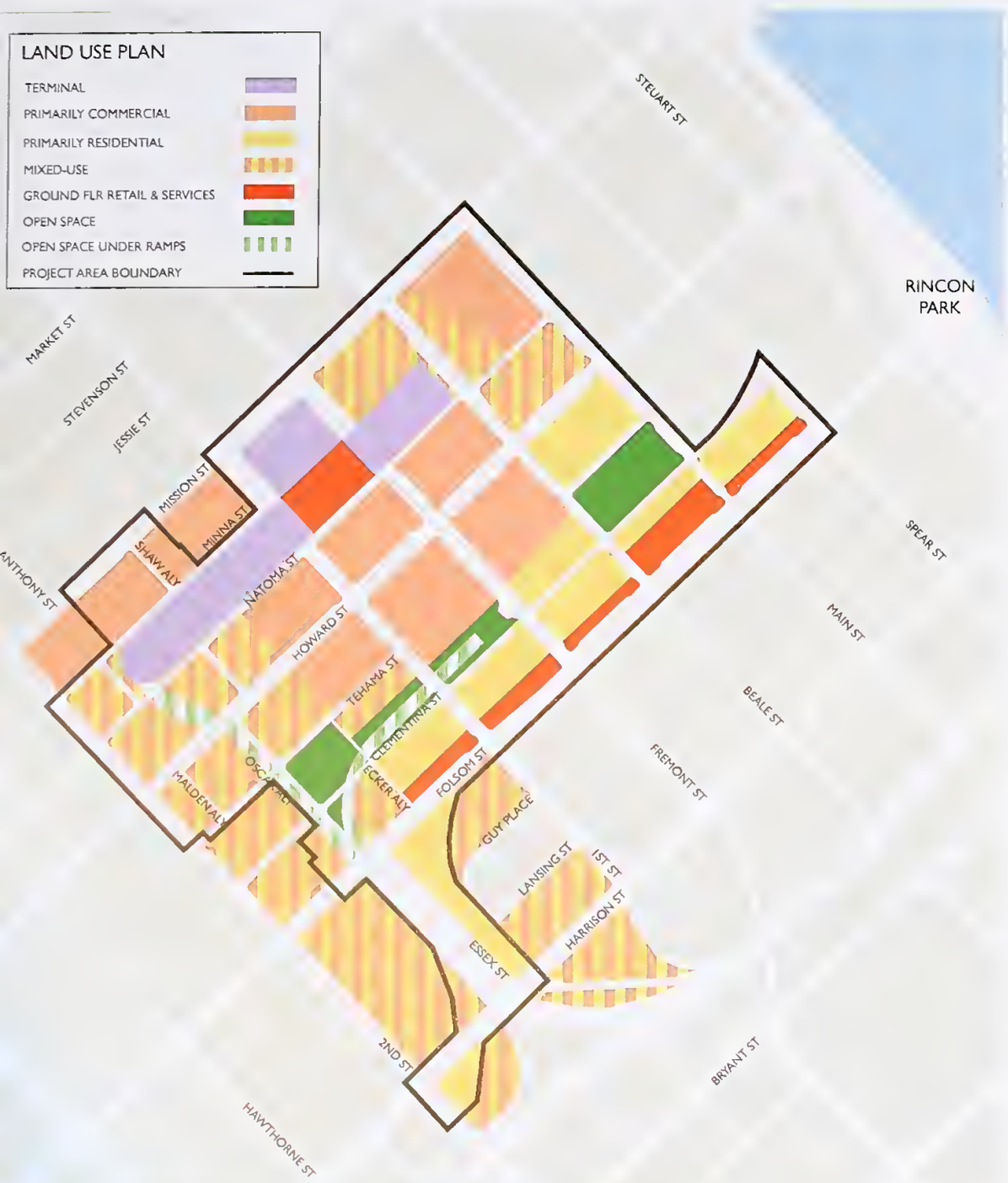
The plan above identifies the City's categories assigned to significant buildings. Buildings which fall under Categories I and II are the most valuable and, therefore, are required to be retained. Categories III-V are considered "contributory buildings" and allow for greater alteration.

LAND USE PLAN

Given the area's existing land uses and the current and projected market conditions, current land use pressures encourage limited office space and an abundance of residential space. The predominance of office and commercial space north of the area boundary makes mixed-use, commercial and office space ideal along Mission Street (see Exhibit 3.2). At the heart of this commercial zone, the ground floor of the Terminal will provide commuters and workers with retail amenities. The center blocks, bordered on the north and south by Natoma and Tehama Streets, on the east by Beale Street, and on the west by the mid-block between First and Second Streets are currently entitled office space developments and will remain as such unless the property owners decide to sell or the entitlements expire or are repealed.

Considering the local and regional need for high-density housing near public transit and the blossoming residential neighborhoods to the east and south of the Project Area, the development parcels along Folsom Street are ideal for high-density residential. The creation of additional residential units will improve the city's job to housing ratio, and thereby reduce San Francisco's chronic shortage of affordable housing. The ground floor use along Folsom Street will be composed of neighborhood-serving retail in order to conveniently meet the needs of both Transbay and Rincon Hill residents.

To respect the historic and civic districts to the west, surrounding new development in the Project Area will be mixed-use and should be similar in character and massing to that in adjacent districts. The Land Use Plan (Exhibit 3.3) identifies the locations of these recommendations.



Housing Development

Creating a diverse mix of housing types, including affordable housing, is a priority for the Design for Development. The housing development will contain a wide range of housing types, including townhouses, low- and mid-rise units, and tower units in order to accommodate various household types and sizes. The development assumes an average unit size of 1,000 square feet, which allows for a wide range of studios and one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. In addition, thirty-five percent of all new housing units built within the proposed Project Area will be affordable to very low-, low-, and moderate-income families, defined by the area's median income. These affordable units will include 100% affordable developments, such as extremely-low income housing and senior housing, as well as inclusionary units within market-rate developments. The affordable units will be located throughout the area, to provide housing for formerly homeless individuals and families, seniors, and first-time homeowners.

Housing Development Requirements

- Create a mixture of housing types, sizes and affordability to attract a diverse residential population, with a mix of towers, mid-rise, and low-rise units of various sizes.
- Develop high-density housing to capitalize on the transit-oriented opportunities within the project area, and provide more housing close to downtown San Francisco.
- Support people's choice to purchase or rent housing without parking, reducing their overall housing cost.
- Focus residential development along Folsom, Beale and Main Streets, and design these streets as mixed-use residential corridors.
- Maximize housing development on publicly-owned properties in order to provide financial support to the new Transbay Terminal and Caltrain Extension according to the Development Controls and Design Guidelines.
- Encourage preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures within the area, where feasible.
- Encourage energy-efficient and environmentally sound practices with regard to water, indoor air quality and materials procurement.

This block along Beale Street abuts the Transbay Area's northeast boundary. Such tower spacing creates a wall, preventing light and air into downtown and diminishes a positive pedestrian experience.

Office and Hotel Development

Commercial development will be concentrated along Mission and Natoma Streets, northeast of the Mixed-Use Historic District (highlighted in Exhibit 3.5). Because it surrounds the new Transbay Terminal and is adjacent to the Financial District, the area is most appropriate for office and hotel uses.

Office and Hotel Development Requirements

- Concentrate new office and hotel development on parcels adjacent to the new Transbay Terminal and along Mission Street.
- Create well-designed parks and sunny plazas for office workers and residents.
- Encourage retail and restaurant establishments to serve employees, residents, and visitors.
- Allow a mix of uses on the upper floors of new commercial buildings.

Retail and Neighborhood Amenity Development

With thousands of new residential units being developed in both the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods, a sufficient amount of retail and neighborhood amenities will be needed to serve them, as part of full-service, walkable neighborhoods. Clustering services and amenities, including a supermarket, drug stores, and child care facilities, can help to create a community core. Therefore, all ground floor uses along Folsom Street will be devoted to retail and small office use, as well as community space to serve residents and workers of a wide range of ages and income.

Retail and Neighborhood Amenity Development Requirements

- Promote neighborhood serving retail establishments to provide residents and workers with immediate walking access to daily shopping needs.
- Encourage adequate public community services, such as childcare, schools, and libraries.
- Create a Neighborhood Benefit District to assist in funding streetscape and open space improvements and maintenance.
- Give preference for smaller retail tenants over one large tenant per block.
- Encourage the creation of ground floor flex space in new developments that can be used as offices and later be converted to retail uses when market demand is sufficient.

Mixed-Use Infill

The area to the southwest of the Terminal, bordered by Second Street is historic in nature. Two conservation districts (identified on p 3.6 and in Exhibit 3.7) have allowed the area to maintain its identity and character. Smaller parcels, low-rise buildings, and historic architectural details characterize the district. All new development will be of comparable scale in order to infill existing and future vacant parcels.

Mixed-Use Infill Requirements

- Preserve and enhance historic buildings and uses.
- Maintain existing historic parcel configurations.
- Infill vacant parcels with contextual, low-rise, mixed-use development.
- Renovate existing buildings to face open space and alleys.

4 URBAN FORM FRAMEWORK

URBAN FORM FRAMEWORK

Through thoughtful urban design the Transbay district will be a complementary and exciting addition to the downtown skyline, while preserving a rich street level experience within the district. The development proposal consists of a few tall, slender towers, well-spaced to allow sunlight and views to permeate through the district, that punctuate a four- to eight-story base with individual townhouses and retail uses that spill out onto the sidewalks.

BACKGROUND

San Francisco is well-known for the comfortable, human scale of its neighborhoods, due in part to a street grid of small blocks, highly-articulated architectural treatment on residences, and its dramatic topography and setting. These attributes have made the city one of the few walkable American cities. The Transbay Design for Development can enhance this character through careful attention to urban form—how buildings enhance the pedestrian realm, in the size and relationship of city blocks, and in the placement and sculpting of new additions to the skyline. Responding to the adjacency of the Bay, downtown, and so many of San Francisco's distinct neighborhoods, the Design for Development offers future Transbay residents a compatible, exciting new urban neighborhood. New development in Transbay will prevent congested building massing with widely-spaced towers that will preserve sunlight and views by stepping down towards the water and the historic district.

Issues and Constraints

- Building Form and Massing
- Views and Sunlight

Building Form and Massing

The prevalent development trend in the area has been the construction of mid-rise, large floor plate office buildings. Such development does not take full advantage of its location downtown and proximity to transit. Therefore, massing alternatives and appropriate building footprint sizes have been further analyzed to reach the maximum development potential and to create a livable ground level environment. The northern edge of the Transbay Area, which borders the Financial District, maintains some of the downtown character. A few new high-rise office developments are interspersed along Mission and Howard Streets. The northwest section of the Transbay Project Area has a fine grain parcelization with historic and mid-rise buildings that should be respected with new development.

Views and Sunlight

In order to meet the city's housing needs and to fully utilize the public parcels, new development in the district should be dense. However, the way in which this density is achieved, and the quality of the environment on the street will be fundamental to the area's success. Location, separation, and floor size (bulk) of towers will significantly affect public access to views and sunlight. Therefore, an important aspect of the Design for Development is to maintain public views to and from San Francisco's neighborhoods citywide, the Financial District, and the Bay.

New mid-rise office development in the Transbay area is bordered by freeway off-ramps and parking lots.

Opportunities

– High-density Residential Character
– Adjacent Development Patterns

High-density Residential Character

Unquestionably, to meet the current and future housing needs of San Francisco residents, new residential development is needed. Given the limited land available for development and the Transbay Project Area's close proximity to the downtown core and the proposed new Transbay Terminal, the sustainable solution is to develop high-density housing. To best understand how to achieve this density while creating a livable neighborhood, the Design for Development references the best practices of other cities. The dense residential development in downtown Vancouver, British Columbia has become a model for many North American cities, and has informed the Transbay Design for Development guidelines. The building types and the public amenities of recent Vancouver developments serve as ideal examples for San Francisco's downtown development.

Since 1991, Vancouver has produced approximately 30,000 new downtown housing units, about 20% of which are affordable. The Transbay Design for Development requires a broad mix of low- and high-rise housing and ensures that at least 35% of the new units will be affordable to moderate-, low- and very low-income families.

In Vancouver, the housing, which was developed primarily by large private developers, has had a positive effect on the city's public realm due, in part, to the presence and clarity of public realm design guidelines set by the Vancouver Planning Depart-ment. In addition, Vancouver requires development fees for city services and amenities, including developer construction and land dedication for community facilities.

Most blocks are comprised of point towers (with height, bulk and placement restrictions), that meet the sidewalk in the form of low-rise residential townhouses or ground floor retail space. The townhouses at the base of the towers open onto the street. Each townhouse unit has its own entry, slightly elevated from the sidewalk and fronted by stoops and landscaping. Such treatment provides privacy for the residents while activating the street edge. These individual unit entries enhance the public realm by creating front door comings and goings, providing "eyes on the street," creating a richer architectural variety, and allowing far more personalization than commonly found in high-density residential buildings. The slight elevation of the ground floor units and dimensions of the front transition space are all key to providing units with privacy and defensibility. Parking is completely underground (except where prohibited by underground rail lines) with approximately four feet of planting soil above to allow for ample tree growth. These key urban design elements have been adapted and incorporated in the Design for Development in order to ensure the highest quality design in the Transbay neighborhood.

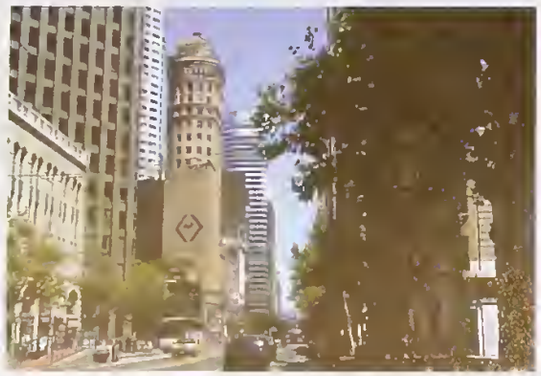
Vancouver's new residential development has created high quality, high-density neighborhoods with widely-spaced towers and townhouses that engage the sidewalk (above and above left).
Source: Vancouver Planning Department

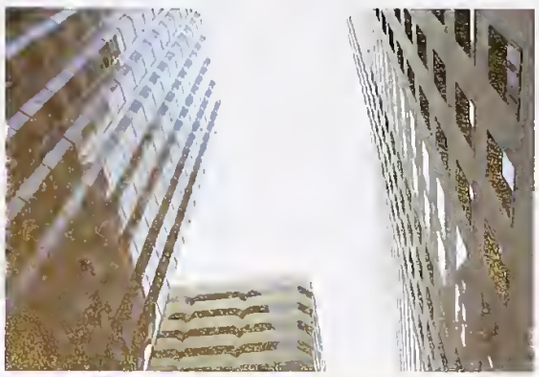
North of Market

- North/South oriented street grid
- Smaller blocks
- Greater natural tower separation
- Views preserved to and from buildings

South of Market

- Street grid shifted off due North
- Larger blocks with fewer streets
- Tight building spacing with less natural tower separation
- Lack of transparency
- Obstructed views





The North of Market block (above) maintains light on its facade due to generous spacing between towers and wide sidewalks. Whereas, the building spacing in South of Market (right) can sometimes create dark sidewalks and unpleasant street experience. Additional development must be carefully planned to prevent creating urban canyons and dark street environments.

Adjacent Development Patterns

The adjacency of the Transbay Area to downtown San Francisco highlights the differences in block configuration, height limits, and land use. When determining how best to redevelop the Transbay publicly-owned parcels with high-density residential towers, the tower placement and street conditions of downtown San Francisco were referenced and contrasted with South of Market. This comparison highlights how the pattern of smaller downtown blocks allows for greater tower separation, light access, and views to and from the buildings and the city's landmarks. In contrast, some of the blocks within Transbay are as long as three North of Market blocks. The current development trend to fully develop the large blocks with four or more high-rise towers per block and minimum podium heights of eight floors would create an opaque wall of development, and prevent light, air, views, and sky exposure within the blocks. Without additional streets and sidewalks, ample tower spacing, and variety along the podium level, future development is bound to create a congested South of Market with a compromised public environment.

Vancouver, B.C. has regulated the spacing of new residential towers to maintain public views between buildings and to the water. High-density is achieved without compromising the quality of life for residents and workers.

SKYLINE TREATMENT

Invariably, the skyline can shape the way residents and visitors think of the city. Residents form sentimental attachments to natural and built landmarks; visitors travel long distances to be photographed in front of them. San Francisco's skyline has long been regarded as unique, given the city's position in the Bay Area, its fluctuating terrain, its bridges, and more recently, the downtown skyscrapers. Vantage points throughout the Bay Area and the city offer residents and visitors views of the downtown. As one enters the city from the east via the Bay Bridge, or from the south on I-280, the Financial District's high-rises dominate the skyline and shape one's image of San Francisco. Similarly, the views from important public spaces, like Dolores Park, Twin Peaks and the Bay, provide sweeping views of downtown that orient people to the city. As a result, any new high-density development must consider its cumulative effect on the skyline and on the views to and from the city.

To avoid creating a continuation of one downtown mass of high-rise development that blocks views through and across the district to important landmarks (like the Bay Bridge and Twin Peaks), towers should be slender and well-spaced. This development pattern will allow light and views to and from downtown. Until now, most high-rise development that has spread south from Market has been in the form of large, closely-spaced, squat towers. This configuration is due in part to the floor plate requirements of commercial office space and unrestrictive setback requirements. However, the crowded result is detrimental to both the skyline and the ground level experience. The bulk, limited variety among tower tops, and heights of the towers create a dull skyline; make the street level dark, foreboding, and crowded by towers looming above; and block access to the sky. Instead, the high-rises should be designed as elegant point towers with varied roof treatment to provide a dynamic skyline.

This example of residential towers demonstrates that sunlight and an airy skyline can be preserved while improving the streetscape activity.

To maximize the buildout of the large South of Market block size, previous proposals have placed two towers (per half-block) above an eight-floor base. This configuration requires the towers to be placed in a checkerboard pattern, in efforts proponents claim will increase privacy and improve views for residents within each tower.

UNDESIRABLE

DESIRABLE

Congested residential towers exemplified in Hong Kong (above left) decrease the quality of life for residents and reduce value of all development. Whereas, towers in downtown Vancouver with more generous spacing (above right) provide relief to the skyline and street level.

However, the tower proximity is too close to maintain public access to light and views, regardless of the diagonal distance between them. The offset towers create a wall of development along the skyline from various vantage points. In addition, a consistent 85-foot base height and little difference in tower height create a monotonous street wall and skyline, respectively. In response, rather than cluster new towers on one block, the Design for Development requires the following skyline treatment:

The Skyline Treatment Requirements

- Require tall, slender towers to be widely-spaced to enhance public views and the skyline.
- Enhance the skyline with varying building heights.
- Step building heights down toward the waterfront and away from the downtown core to the south and west.
- Concentrate tallest buildings adjacent to the high-density Financial District and the Terminal.
- Enforce guidelines that ensure visual interests and slender dimensions.

Development Concepts

To fully explore the development potential in the Transbay Project Area, the Team generated three development concepts.

Concept One extends the maximum allowable development pattern from the EIS/EIR, placing two towers per half-block. The pattern overlaid onto the Project Area's development sites would result in 13 towers of 30–40 floors, with an eight-floor base covering the remaining land area. Significant features of Concept One are:

- Many towers (13 at 30–40 floors each), blocking views to and from downtown and the waterfront.
- Eight-floor base, creating a monotonous and shaded pedestrian environment.
- 4,700 residential units, the maximum studied in the EIS/EIR.

Concept Two has fewer towers and a lower podium level. It creates a more livable neighborhood than Concept One, providing greater distance between towers and increasing access to air, light and views. But, it still has a large number of towers, which creates congestion along the skyline and at the ground level. In addition, this concept does not take advantage of the available transit-oriented development opportunities in the area because it is not able to supply enough housing, creating only 2,400 units. By limiting the number of dwelling units, it does little to address the city's need for housing or to improve the job to housing balance. The features of Concept Two include:

- Fewer, shorter towers (nine at 18–30 floors), leaving more light and space, but still blocking some views.
- Lower base height (three to seven floors), creating a better pedestrian environment, but less variety.
- 2,400 residential units.

Existing and Pipeline Projects outside Study Area

Concept One

Concept Two

Concept Three

Concept Three reduces the number of towers even further than Concept Two, but increases their heights and slenderness. The base varies from four to eight floors. The Team, the CAC, and the members of the public present at the workshops found that this concept maximizes the transparency of the development and preserved the most views to downtown and the waterfront. It also provides a greater mix of low-rise and tower units than the other concepts, which allow for a more interesting street level environment, improved access to sunlight, and variety within individual developments. Finally, it provides a larger amount of development than Concept Two, though still well under the maximum studied in the EIS/EIR.

- Fewest number of towers (six at 30–55 floors), preserving most views.
- Low base height (four to eight floors), allowing more low-rise development to activate the street and improve the human scale of the development.
- 3,200 residential units.

Shadow Impacts

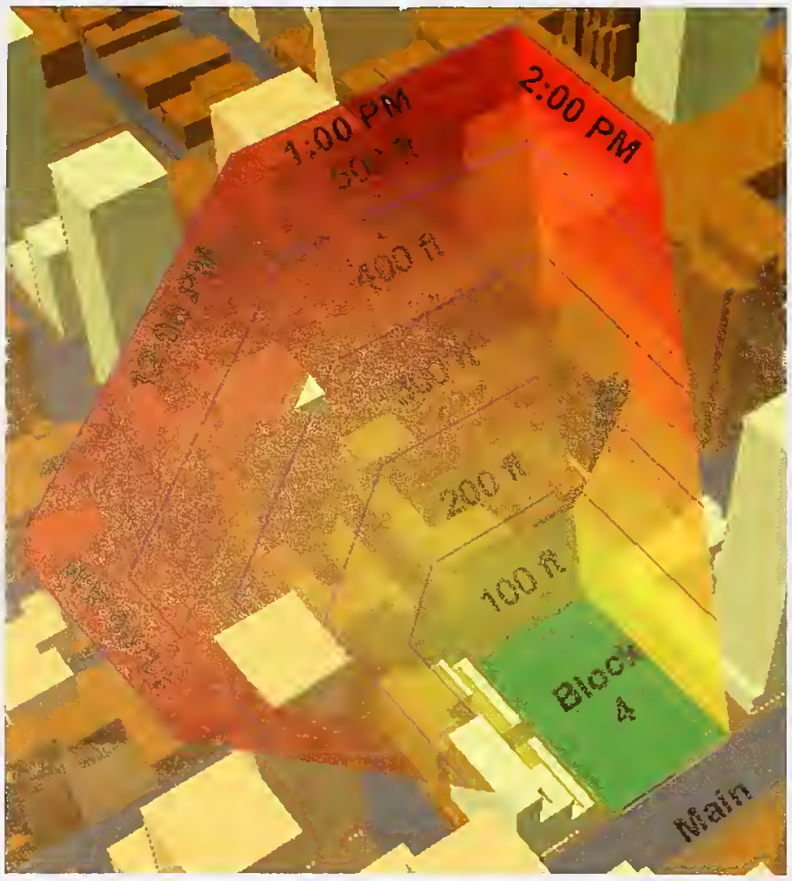
Building massing, including the height, bulk, and location, proposed under the Transbay Design for Development was designed to minimize shadows on the public environment. Transbay Square, the proposed new park between Main and Beale Streets, will receive maximum amount of sunlight at midday from 11AM to 2 PM (Pacific Standard Time) between the spring and fall Equinox. Imaginary cut-off shadow planes that project upwards from the park edges were used to set the allowable building heights under this standard. Morning sunlight will reach the northern sidewalk of Folsom Boulevard on those blocks within the Project Area where development on the south side of Folsom Boulevard stays below 85 feet.

Two previously proposed projects (shown in tan in the shadow diagram) currently in the final stages of the approval process and located outside the project area to the south of Folsom Boulevard, between Beale and Steuart Streets, will significantly block sun access to the northern sidewalk on Folsom Boulevard during the mid-day hours for all months of the year. Within the Project Area to the north of Folsom Boulevard, building placement and heights have been arranged in such a way as to maximize sunlight to both sidewalks during the early afternoon hours between the spring and fall Equinox. Likewise, sunlight will reach alternating sidewalks from late morning to mid-day hours for all months of the year on First, Fremont, Beale, Main and Spear Streets.

A shadow study was conducted for each concept to reveal how well its development layout will maintain sunlight on public open spaces, streets, alleys and individual units throughout the year. The studies shown represent mid-day sun conditions on

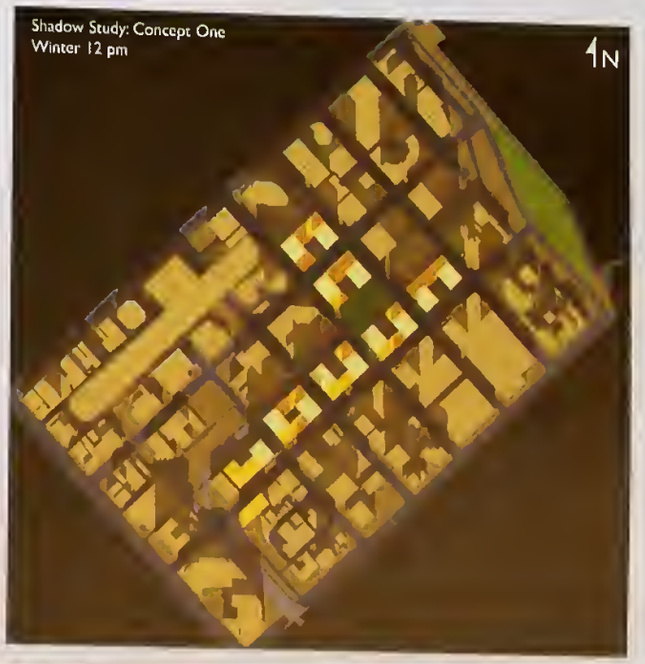
	UNIT MIX			
	Low-rise	Tower	Dwelling Units/Acre	Total Units
Concept One	35%	65%	470	4700
Concept Two	45%	55%	240	2400
Concept Three	42%	57%	320	3200

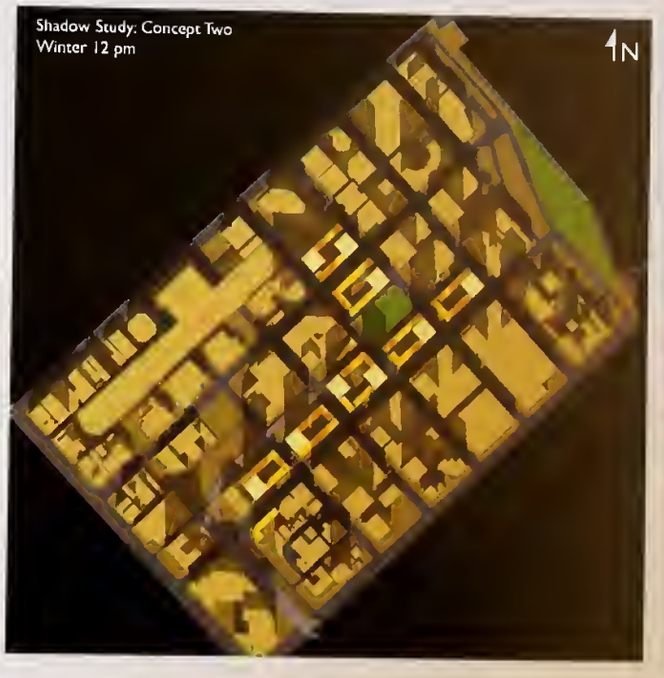
The table above identifies the unit ratio for each concept.

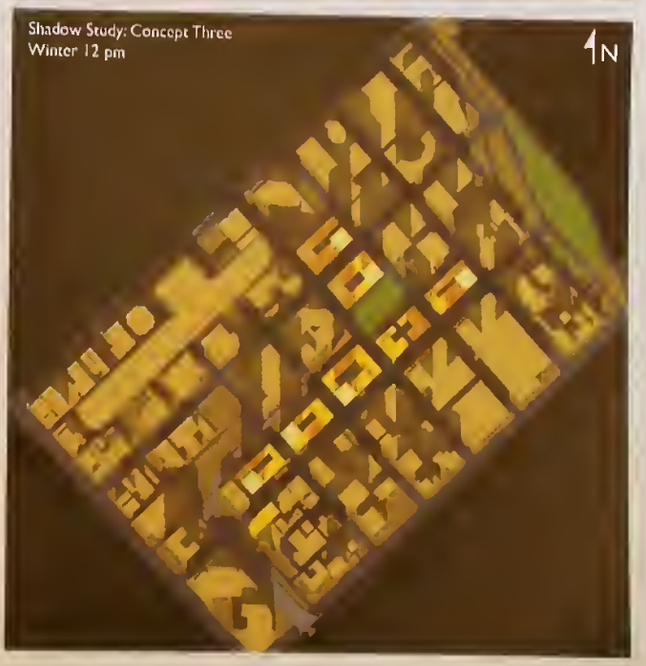


The shadow diagram (left) shows the impact of various tower concepts on the proposed Transbay Square. The slope of the planes determined the exact placement and height of future residential towers and the height of lower building volumes surrounding the new park. The new buildings (shown in beige) will allow the park direct sunlight between 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM between the spring and fall Equinox. Proposed towers south of Folsom Boulevard (outside the Transbay Project Area), will shadow the park for part of the day.

December 21st (winter solstice), when the sun is the lowest in the sky and shadows are the longest. Even in these conditions, Concept Three met the sunlight requirements, allowing sunlight to all of the above-mentioned components of the private and public realm. This, combined with its positive impact on the skyline, led it to be developed into the preferred concept.







The Plan

Based on the comparative analysis of the three conceptual designs, and community input from the second and third public workshops, the Team identified Concept Three as the preferred design concept. With fewer, taller towers and a varied base height, it has the most potential to create a livable, high-density downtown neighborhood. This concept is able to achieve the greatest diversity of unit types while still creating a large amount of new residential development to address the city's and the region's housing crisis. On the resubdivided, publicly-owned parcels alone, 3,200 units will be constructed. As a result of the public's feedback, Concept Three was developed into the Design for Development Plan (Exhibit 4.1). The following requirements for the future downtown neighborhood were incorporated.

The Development Plan Requirements

- Towers should be elegant and well-spaced, instead of bulky and close together.
- Ensure high quality designs that enhance livability, provide aesthetic variety and incorporate "green" building techniques.
- Place and sculpt towers to avoid shadows on public parks.

The Plan

The plan demonstrates the potential growth of the Transbay area without constraints (Exhibit 4.1). Adjacent, privately-owned parcels, as well as vacant parcels in Rincon Hill, present the opportunity for a substantial amount of additional residential development. Such infill on private parcels will increase the total housing figure and the population for the area at-large. Therefore, it is even more important that the new development on the publicly-owned parcels provide ground level retail amenities and services to meet the neighborhood's needs.

EXHIBIT 4.1

The Plan

The Constrained Plan

In addition to the Design for Development Plan, a "Constrained Plan" was prepared to reflect possible, yet highly undesirable external factors that could influence development. These factors include the Caltrans proposal for a curved freeway off-ramp at the corner of Folsom and Fremont Streets ("the Folsom leg"); a proposed elevated mid-block loop at the intersection of the new Terminal ramp and the Folsom Street off-ramp; and the construction of a low-density live/work project on a key acquisition site (the northwest parcel on the block between First Street and Ecker Alley). Each of these constraints disrupt the full potential of blocks ideal for development. Overall, the Constrained Plan results in a less desirable development scheme and streetscape experience (Exhibit 4.2).

The Constrained Plan

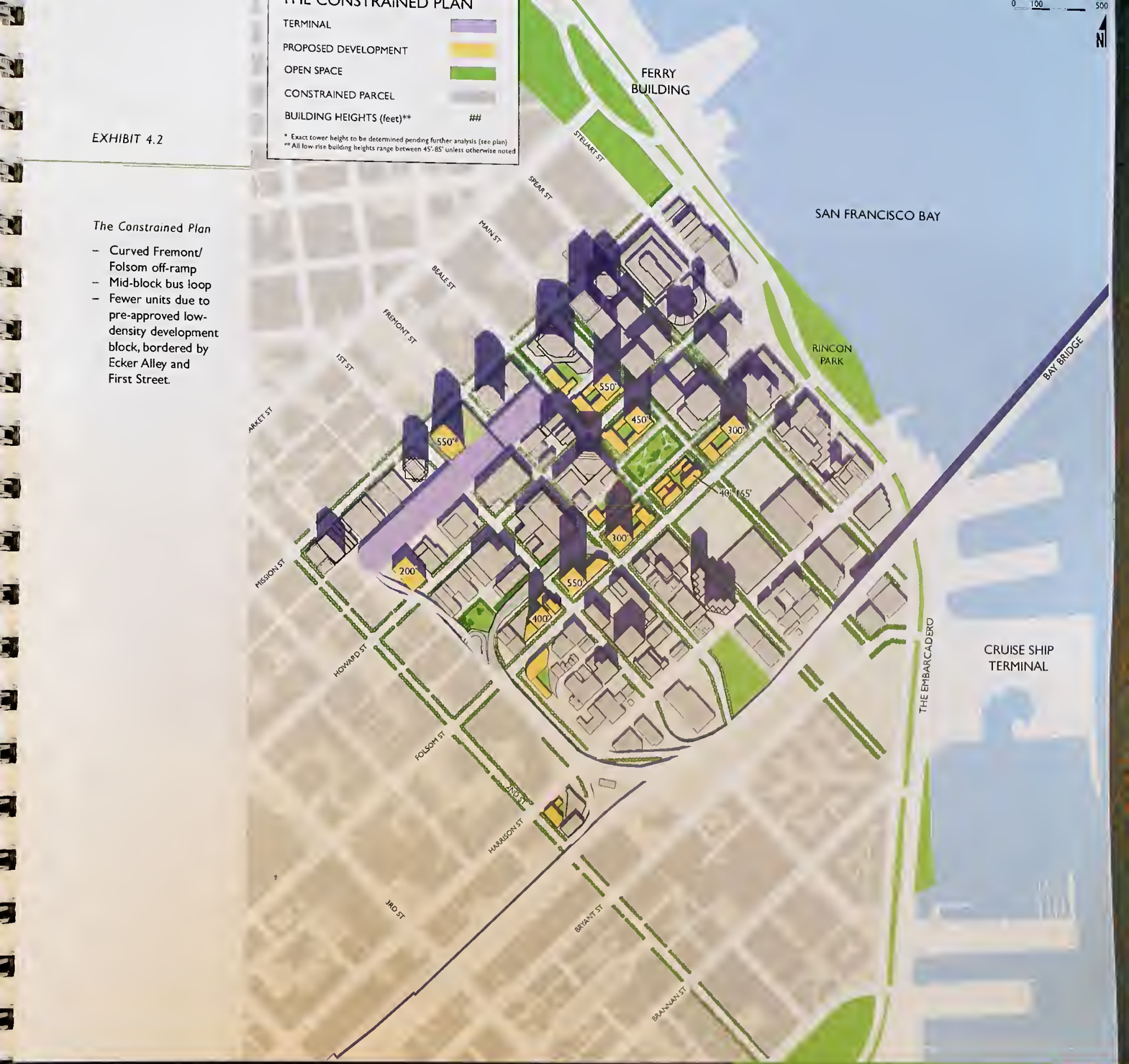
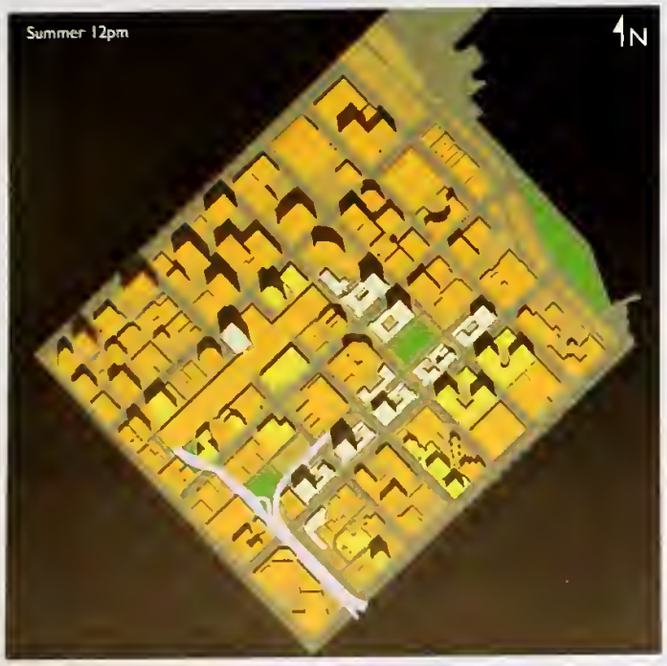
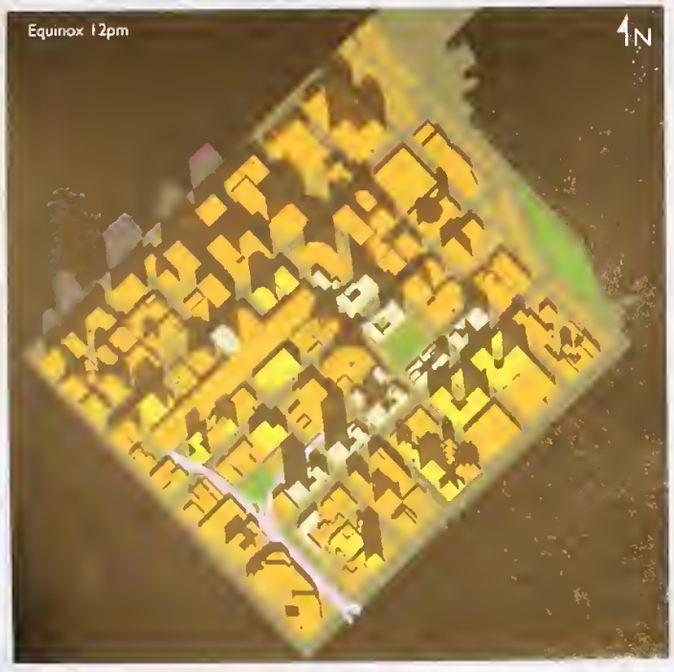


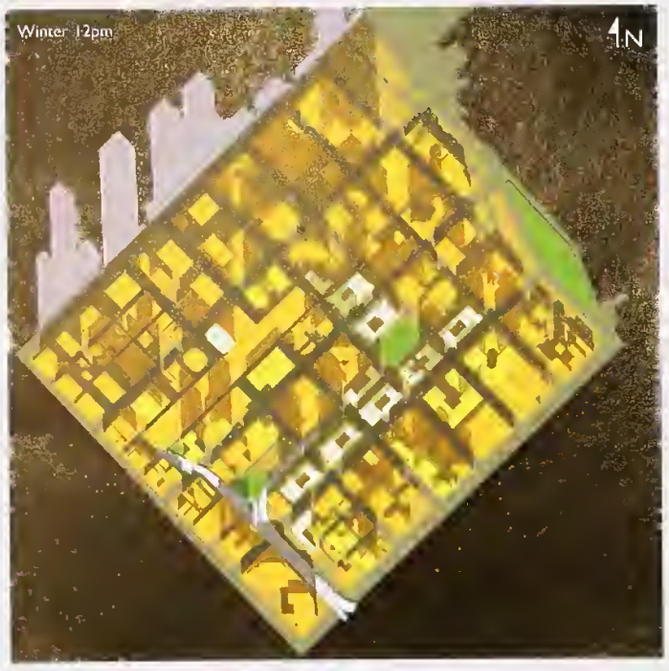
EXHIBIT 4.2

The Constrained Plan

- Curved Fremont/ Folsom off-ramp
- Mid-block bus loop
- Fewer units due to pre-approved low-density development block, bordered by Ecker Alley and First Street.





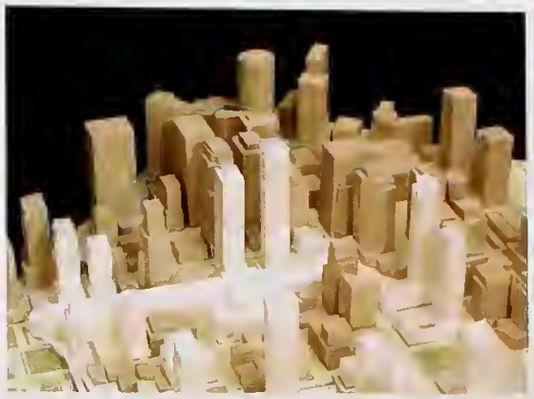


Shadow Impacts

The shadow studies (below and right) show how the proposed development within the Transbay Project Area will affect sunlight and shadow. The Design for Development maintains direct sunlight to the public environment. Even during the winter months, when the sun is lowest in the sky and, therefore, shadows are longest, the proposed Transbay Square maintains at least three hours of direct sunlight mid-day and will be unaffected by the Design for Development high-rises.

Height Restrictions

To respect the established urban form of the downtown "mound" and the public views to and from the Bay and hills, the plan provides tower heights that step down toward the waterfront and requires towers closer to downtown and away from the shoreline to be taller than the others. Proposed buildings along the southern side of Folsom Boulevard, outside of the Transbay Project Area, would shade open space if it was located directly along Folsom Boulevard for the majority of time between the hours of 11am–2pm. Therefore, the proposed Transbay Square will be located a block north of Folsom Boulevard, bordered by Clemen-tina and Tehama Streets. These streets will be more residentially-oriented with front stoops and entries to townhouse units to engage the street and to provide a human scale. The building heights on the block directly to the south of Transbay Square, are restricted to avoid producing long shadows and an unpleasant open space environment. Low- to mid-rise buildings step up, away from the park, framing it as a special "urban room." To maintain both sunlight access, as well as a more intimate, human-scaled environment in the narrower streets and alleys, such as Clementina Street, towers are set back from the alleys. Alley-fronting buildings will be no higher than 45 feet, with anything higher set back at least 15 feet, as recommended in the Planning Department's San Francisco's proposed Alley Guidelines.



Hotel as proposed in the Transbay Terminal Improvement Plan.

Hotel moved to the southwest side of the entry plaza.

Hotel replaced by Transit Tower.

Transit Tower and Proposed Hotel

The MTC Plan incorporates a hotel adjacent to the Terminal site. Such an amenity would accommodate high speed rail travelers and benefit the Project as a whole; however, careful placement will determine its value. Given the approval of a 600-foot commercial tower at 301 Mission (the block immediately adjacent to east of the hotel proposed in the MTC Plan), such tower spacing would violate the Design for Development requirements by creating a congested skyline, and an urban canyon at the intersection of Fremont and Mission Streets (see above left). In addition, the open Terminal Plaza proposed at the southeast corner of First and Mission Streets will be shaded by the new Terminal, which will be at least 85 feet in height, and by the adjacent tower at this corner for the majority of time between the hours of 1pm–4pm.

Therefore, the Design for Development Team has identified a new location for the hotel that reduces the high-rise's proximity to adjacent towers (see above middle). The repositioning of the original hotel placement to the southwest side of the entry plaza maintains views and sunlight between towers. To maximize the potential of the site adjacent to both the Transbay Terminal and the Terminal's grand civic Plaza and mark this new downtown hub on the skyline, a Transit Tower has been proposed in place of the hotel (above right). This tower would encompass a mix of uses. At ground level, the Transit Tower will be open to the public and flow into the adjacent Plaza. Together, the positioning and design of the Tower, the Plaza and the Terminal will offer the city a signature gateway, while accentuating the San Francisco skyline with a distinctive landmark. Further height, shadow, and wind studies will determine how to best sculpt the tower to create such a notable landmark tower.

The Transit Tower Requirements

- Celebrate transit hub as a major gateway to the city, and take advantage of prime transit service.
- Offer a mixed-use program: hotel and office space.
- Introduce a civic landmark to the skyline.
- Supplement total development program.
- Provide funds for the Transbay Terminal.

Existing

Transbay Development (in blue)

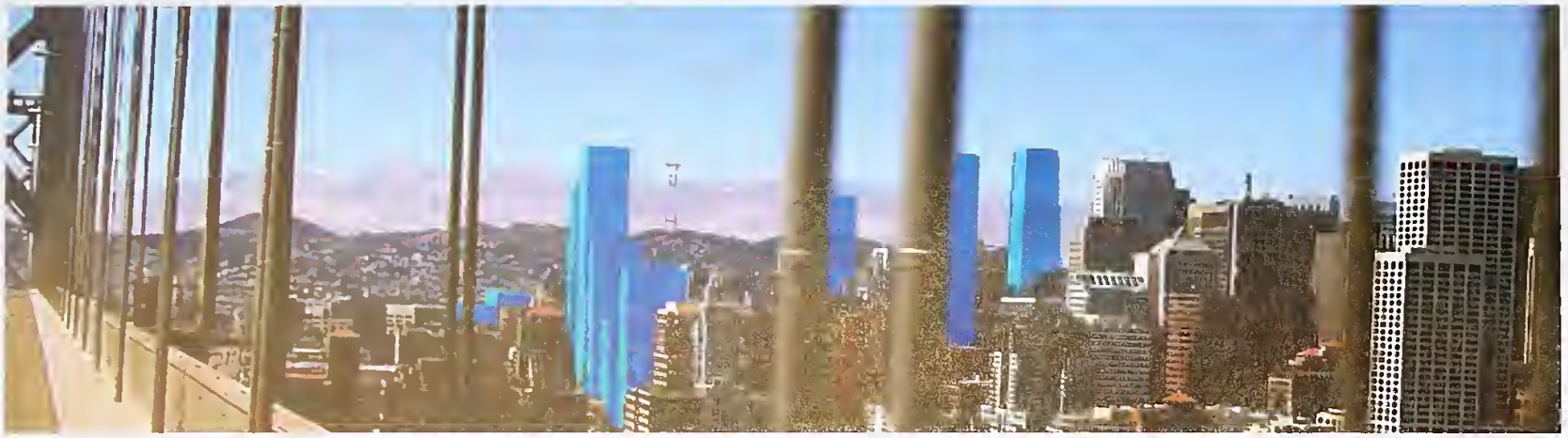
View Analysis

Given all of the urban design objectives, view studies were performed to test the effect of the Design for Transbay Development on the San Francisco skyline. Six views from around the city were modeled to show the existing skyline compared with the city's future development. Numerous proposed projects outside of the Transbay Area are also modeled to more accurately represent the city's skyline in 2020.

Transbay Development–Rendered

Transbay Development with Rincon Hill and downtown Pipeline Projects (in green)

Existing



Transbay Development (in blue)

Transbay Development–Rendered

Transbay Development with Rincon Hill and downtown Pipeline Projects (in green)

Existing

Transbay Development (in blue)

Transbay Development–Rendered

Transbay Development with Rincon Hill and downtown Pipeline Projects (in green)

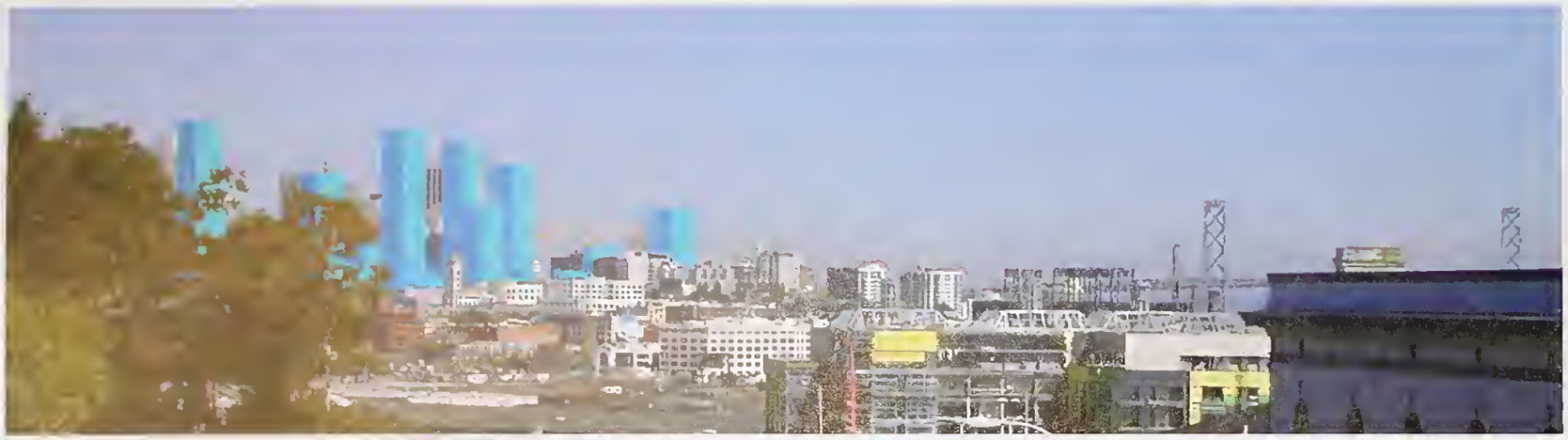
Existing

Transbay Development (in blue)

Transbay Development – Rendered

Transbay Development with Rincon Hill and downtown Pipeline Projects (in green)

Existing



Transbay Development (in blue)

Transbay Development – Rendered

Transbay Development with Rincon Hill and downtown Pipeline Projects (in green)

VIEW FROM ST. REGIS MUSEUM TOWER
(at Mission and Third Streets)

Existing

Transbay Development (in blue)

Transbay Development with Rincon Hill and downtown Pipeline Projects (in green)

BASE TREATMENT

A key component of the Design for Development Plan is the treatment of the building base design; how pedestrians experience and view both commercial and residential buildings from the ground determines the quality of a neighborhood. Therefore, a key element in creating an active and lively neighborhood is creating attractive, engaging low-level spaces, that are either experienced or visible from the street level. This treatment includes: providing a variety of building heights along the low-rise podium level; requiring development to be rich and diverse in architectural character; and maximizing the quality and frequency of storefronts, openings, and pedestrian entries at the ground level. The Design for Development has made it a priority to avoid monotonous, rigid development and to produce guidelines that strive for the diversity in character that makes San Francisco neighborhoods famous. Some of the key ways to do this are listed below:

The Base Treatment Requirements

- Activate the street edge with attractive, engaging entry treatment and uses.
- Form streets, alleys or mews at the human scale.
- Vary low-rise building heights and architectural character to encourage pedestrian interest.
- Provide a rhythm of entries to individual units allowing "a personalization" of the ground floor environment.

The placement and treatment of residential and commercial entries can help to create an active street edge that complements the streetscape

UNDESIRABLE

Examples of undesirable ground level treatment (above) show how dark window treatment and limited architectural character at the ground level can create an unpleasant pedestrian experience. The stoops are not frequent or articulated enough to improve the streetscape.

DESIRABLE

Source: Voncouver Planning Department

The spacing, level of detail, and quality of landscaping on the two blocks (above) show how a sidewalk can be transformed when entries face the street, rather than turn their backs on or are stacked above parking garages.

improvements. The variety and proximity of entrances along the sidewalk help activate the street for pedestrians and residents and improve the human scale. As compared to long expanses of blank walls shielding parking garages or large commercial space, individual entrances to residences, retail establishments and service providers activate the sidewalk and keep "eyes on the street," thereby, increasing the feeling of security within the neighborhood. The proximity and rhythm of these entries, spaced every 20–30 feet, will make the sidewalk experience much more pleasant and more secure. Residential and commercial entrances should be designed as distinct, identifiable access points. In addition to architectural elements, such as low walls, stoops, and canopies, special streetscape elements, such as paving, planting and lighting, can help distinguish entries.

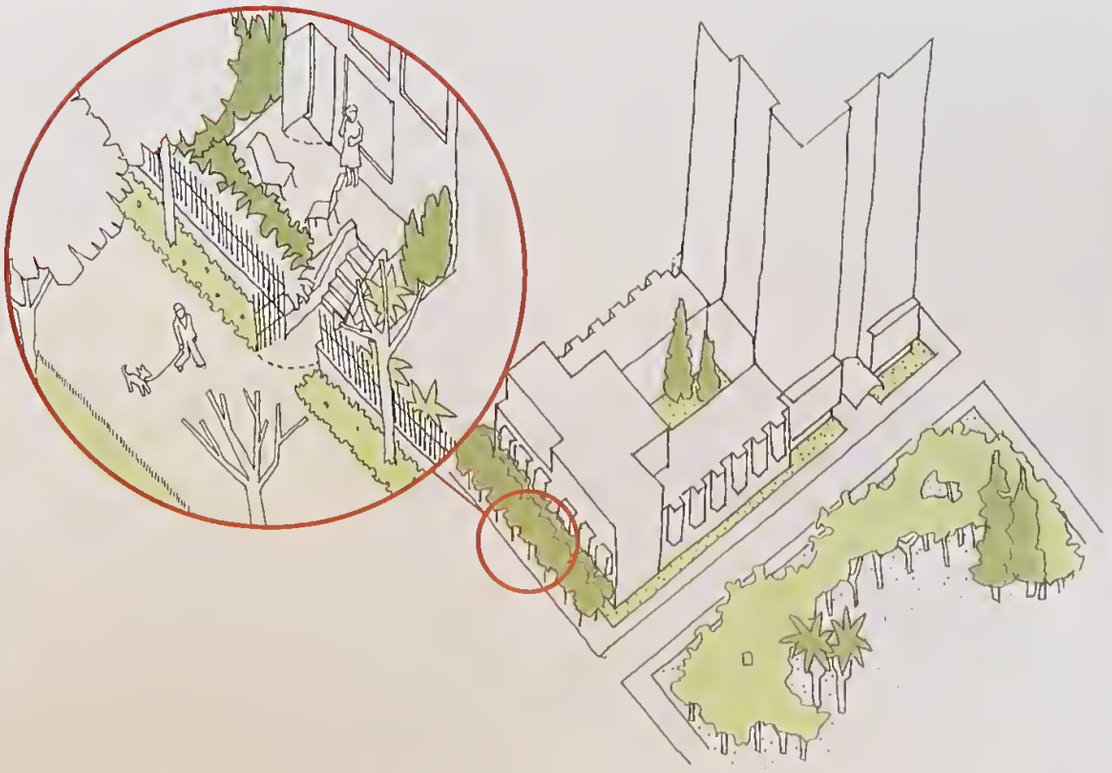
Residential Base Treatment

The drawings to the right demonstrate how a typical residential block lined with townhouses at the ground level provides a human scale to high-density development. Each ground floor unit, regardless if it is part of a low-rise, mid-rise, or tower configuration, has its own entrance stepped up approximately three feet above the sidewalk (as shown in detail in the drawing, near right). All ground level townhouses will have residential units above to maintain the plan's commitment to density. These upper units will be accessed either from within the core, and in some cases, at street level.

The Residential Base Treatment Requirements

- Create individual entries at street.
- Soften building edge with landscaping.
- Provide privacy to ground floor residents.
- Ensure sunlight access to units and internal courtyards.
- Allow personalization of entry gardens and stoops.

As proven successful in Vancouver, BC and in San Diego, these entrances will be setback from the sidewalk at a distance of ten feet to provide residents with a semi-private garden buffer. On slower traffic streets with widths of 35 feet or less, the setbacks can be six feet in depth and still provide the desired privacy. The stoops, raised above the sidewalk, provide a visual buffer between pedestrians and the resident; a ground level higher than four feet creates a distance too great to maintain an active sidewalk and "eyes on the street".



Though the publicly-owned blocks will be developed at approximately the same time, the design guidelines will require that individual buildings maintain their individuality. Development will be accented with a lively repetition of porches, awnings, and bay windows. Public street planting, combined with the semi-public entry way planting, will create a pleasant pedestrian experience, buffering pedestrians and ground-floor residents from street noise.

Each block will enclose a semi-public courtyard at grade. These semi-public courtyards will be visible, at certain points, from the public right-of-way. In addition, to improve the quality of high-density development, the rooftops of the low- and mid-rise buildings will be designed to accommodate roof gardens. Such open space will provide residents with easy access to open space and provide relief to the urban neighborhood.

Retail Base Treatment

In order to avoid underutilized retail and lifeless sidewalks, individualized entries to retail and service establishments should be numerous and directly accessible to pedestrians on the sidewalk. Restaurant and retail entrances should be made visible with the use of architectural canopies, signage and lighting. Ground floor spaces should have a minimum ceiling height of 15 feet and should be designed to provide flexible space that can be transformed to serve new uses over time.

The Retail Base Treatment Requirements

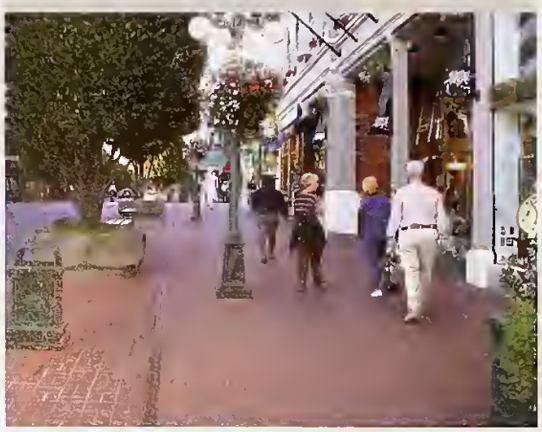
- Provide engaging, identifiable, closely-spaced entries.
- Encourage retail and restaurants to open onto sidewalks.
- Design flexible ground level space.

Parking Treatment

Each block will have an underground parking garage that does degrade the quality of the street-level experience. No more than a total of two entrances and exits to the parking lot are allowed to disrupt the sidewalk on an entire block. All service providers will use the same entrance and exit and will be accommodated inside the garage. The the parking structures will not negatively impact the ground floor residential and commercial space. A single garage under each block does not require that all development by block look identical. Rather, the garage will be constructed as part of a master plan for each block. Each block will be developed with multiple buildings by different developer/architect teams. Regardless, the design guidelines will ensure that each block will uphold fine grain character that makes it unique from other large-scale development projects.

UNDESIRABLE

DESIRABLE



In order to avoid underutilized retail (top left) and lifeless sidewalks (bottom left), increase the number of street entrances, encourage retail to open onto the sidewalks, and use engaging street furniture and signage (as shown in images above right).

5 STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACE FRAMEWORK

STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACE FRAMEWORK

The street and public space environment in Transbay will be transformed into a framework of streets, parks, and pedestrian lanes that provide a rich, active public realm suitable for the community life of the neighborhood. Extra wide sidewalks, landscaped with art, furnishings, and special lighting will accommodate various activities while linking Transbay to the Embarcadero, Yerba Buena Gardens, the Financial District, Union Square, and the emerging nearby residential and mixed-use neighborhoods of the SoMa and Rincon Hill districts.

BACKGROUND

Perhaps more than any other element, great cities are defined by the quality of their public realm, which creates the setting for great buildings, for places for people to relax and exercise, for venues for the public to celebrate or practice democratic expression, for environmental cleansing spaces, and for places of beauty that attract visitors and residents alike.

The public realm has two important parts. Streets and sidewalks provide the largest component of public open space of a city. An equally important component of the public realm in the city are the parks, plazas, and other open and usable public areas.

San Francisco is blessed to have an abundance of high-quality open space. Large parks, (such as Golden Gate Park and the Presidio), small parks and squares (such as Alamo Square and Sydney Walton Park) are among the finest examples of their type in the country. The streets in many parts of San Francisco are among the finest public pedestrian spaces to be found anywhere.

This, however, cannot be said for the Transbay Terminal area where there is no usable off-street, public open space. The streets do not provide significant usable public space because they are currently configured to carry traffic efficiently without providing pedestrian amenities. Indeed, the entire area is a gritty, noisy, polluted environment devoted almost entirely to to the movement of cars, trucks, and transit vehicles.

Issues and Constraints

- Lack of parks, plazas, and other open space
- Poor quality of the street environment

The analysis that follows focuses on the open space and streets that are found in the city, their existing conditions in the Transbay area and the framework for their improvement.

Transbay's existing public environment.

Existing and Planned Public Open Space

Today the Transbay Project Area is not well-supplied with public open space, although there are significant open space amenities around the periphery. While some of these major open spaces are within a 1/4-mile walking distance of the core of the Project Area, their distribution is not ideal. As illustrated in the Existing Major Public Open Space Plan (see Exhibit 5.1), major parks either exist or are planned along the Embarcadero waterfront at Justin Hermann Plaza, Rincon Park, Brannan Street Wharf, and South Beach Park. Other nearby parks and open spaces include South Park and Yerba Buena Gardens.

Yerba Buena Gardens west of the study area.

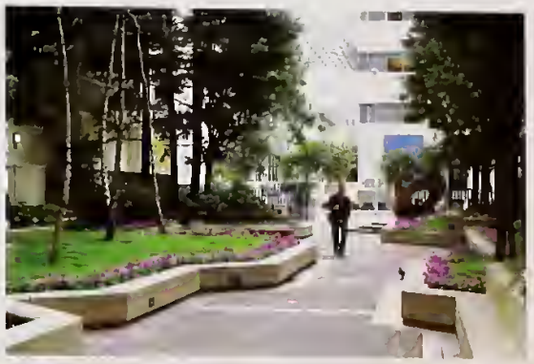
Rincon Point Park on the Embarcadero.

Existing Parks, Plazas and Other Improved Landscapes

Within the Project Area, existing open space is entirely comprised of a limited number of small private urban plazas and courts associated with commercial office buildings and a few residential buildings. As illustrated in the Existing Plazas, Parks and other Improved Landscapes (Exhibit 5.2), these spaces are generally found in the east, the northeast, and the northern portions of the study area. While these spaces fulfill an important role as attractive pedestrian routes or as outdoor places for lunch in warm weather, they are typically unused after normal working hours and on weekends. Furthermore, they are not suited to meet the recreation needs of the neighborhood or the city; they are neither designed nor furnished to provide for any activities other than sitting or walking. In most cases, they are residual spaces left over from building development, and many receive little or no sun exposure during the day. Furthermore, they are not part of a comprehensive framework of public spaces and linkages connecting the area internally and externally.

Despite these shortcomings in the framework of existing local open space, the improvements that have been associated with development of buildings and the streetscape in recent years are generally of high quality. These spaces and the main open spaces in adjoining neighborhoods serve as a starting point for expansion and for infilling of a comprehensive framework of major open spaces, small parks and plazas, attractively landscaped pedestrian connectors, and streetscape improvements that will link the waterfront, Rincon Hill, South Park, Yerba Buena Gardens, and the Financial District. The Design for Development has identified efforts already underway to enliven the streetscape environment with public art. The Yerba Buena Partners for Arts and Education have encouraged the City to introduce public art on the sidewalks and open spaces between Yerba Buena Center and Rincon Park. Building on this vision, the streetscape of the Transbay area can benefit the city as a whole.

Existing small courtyards and improved plazas, landscapes, and connections in and around the Project Area.



Mid-block connection between Main and Spear Streets.

Dow Plaza on Second Street.

Plaza at Foundry Square (at First and Howard Streets).

Existing Streets and Circulation

The Transbay area accommodates a wide range of transportation modes, including motor vehicles, transit, parking, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The area is characterized by competing regional and local traffic demands, difficult pedestrian crossings, poor bicycle facilities, and unattractive sidewalk conditions.

Although vehicular traffic in the area is high, several streets in the area provide more capacity than needed to accommodate the existing and future vehicular traffic flow. It is possible to eliminate travel lanes on these streets, and to convert the right-of-way to bicycle lanes and/or widened sidewalks. In addition, it is possible to convert some of the non-commute streets from one-way to two-way.

However, any changes to the streets in the Project Area need to be consistent with the traffic impact analysis conducted for the Transbay EIS/EIR. As a result, no substantial reconfiguration of the street network (such as converting streets from one-way to two-way) has been proposed at this time, but should be considered in the future, as part of the Planning Department's Downtown Neighborhoods Initiative.

Some roadways, such as First and Fremont Streets, serve as major regional vehicular connections, whereas other roadways, such as Spear Street, have low levels of vehicular activity. Access to and from the I-80/San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge is provided at the Harrison Street and Fremont Street off-ramps, and at the First Street, Essex Street and Sterling Street on-ramps. The substantial volume of traffic going to the Bay Bridge during the evening commute period results in extensive vehicular queuing along portions of many of the north-south and east-west streets.

The Existing Street Functions Plan (Exhibit S.3) summarizes the primary functional role of each of the major streets in the Project Area. The plan illustrates four primary circulation roles:

1. *Transit Corridors:* Major Transit Corridors are those with multiple bus transit lines, including Muni, AC Transit, Samtrans, Golden Gate Transit and others. In some areas, particularly around the new Transbay Terminal, the transit vehicle volumes are high, making the provision of a safe and attractive street environment that links pedestrians to transit a unique design challenge, comparable to dealing with major automobile corridors.

   Other streets carry only a few transit lines. The impact on these streets is much less severe and the presence of these transit facilities can be a positive part of creating a multi-use street environment, if designed properly.

2. *Bicycle Corridors:* Generally, these are streets where Class II bicycle lanes or Class III bicycle routes already exist or are planned as part of the San Francisco Bicycle Plan.

3. *Major Vehicular Corridors*: These are corridors that are part of citywide or regional systems that cannot be substantially changed due to influences beyond the Project Area. As mentioned previously, First and Fremont Streets are the primary examples of major automobile corridors within the study area. These streets present special design problems and cause major impacts at the points where they intersect other streets.

The Project Area also includes a partial system of mid-block alleys. These serve to break up the scale of the otherwise very large blocks, to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle movements and to provide service and parking access. There are several opportunities to extend this system of alleys to provide enhanced pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular local access throughout the area.

Existing alleys and areas under ramps around the Transbay Terminal.

Transit

Muni provides extensive service along Market and Mission Streets, including cross-town bus routes to the Transbay Terminal. Although several Muni bus lines operate within the fringes of the proposed project area, only one bus line currently provides service through the heart of the Transbay district.

Regional transit providers, including AC Transit, Golden Gate Transit and SamTrans, have terminals at the Transbay Terminal, including stops along Mission and Fremont Streets.

Muni operates light rail on the Embarcadero, and bus lines on Third Street will be replaced with the new light rail line, currently under construction.

To address the rapid growth in the South of Market area, Muni prepared the "South of Market Action Plan" in 2000. The plan identified many short-term and medium-term projects, plus other possible changes for future study. Although several improvements have been implemented, others have been deferred (including the potential extension of some cross-town routes into the area). With substantial increase in residential development planned for the area (including the Transbay and Rincon Hill areas), enhancements in transit service, such as more frequent service, extension of cross-town routes, and facility improvements, will be necessary.

Parking

Surrounding the Terminal are many surface parking lots, that will be the focus of future development as described in this report. Most of these lots are temporary facilities located on parcels that previously were part of the old Embarcadero Freeway alignment. In combination with other nearby parking facilities, there are currently over 3,500 public parking spaces in the area. These spaces are used by

Existing Parking Lots

commuters from outside the city as well as from within San Francisco (primarily from the western portion of the city). On-street parking also exists on most streets.

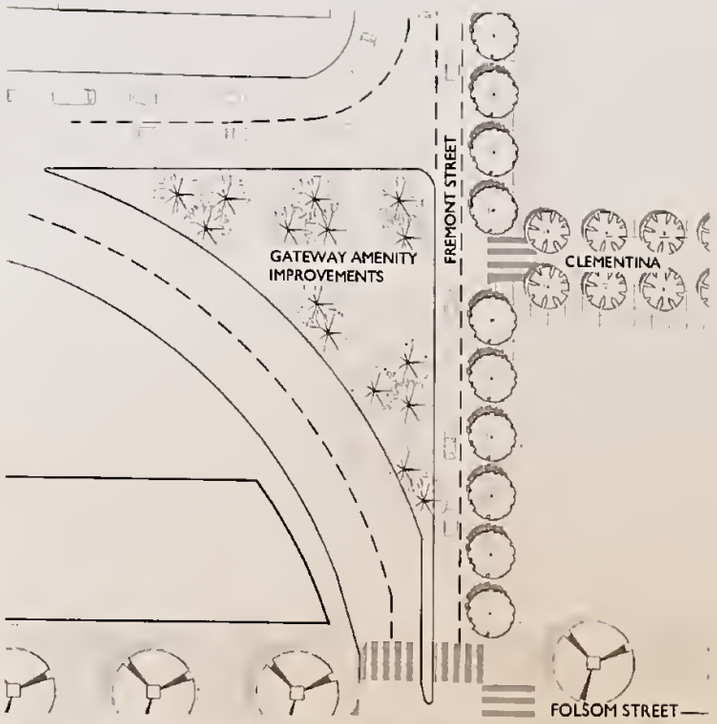
Development of the Project Area will result in the conversion of most of the existing surface public parking facilities sites to housing and neighborhood serving uses. In accordance with the city's Transit-First Policy, traffic demand associated with new development in the area should be met through improvements to transit service and through improved conditions for walking and bicycling, to the degree feasible to reduce the need for new parking (See Appendix 1).

Bicycle Routes

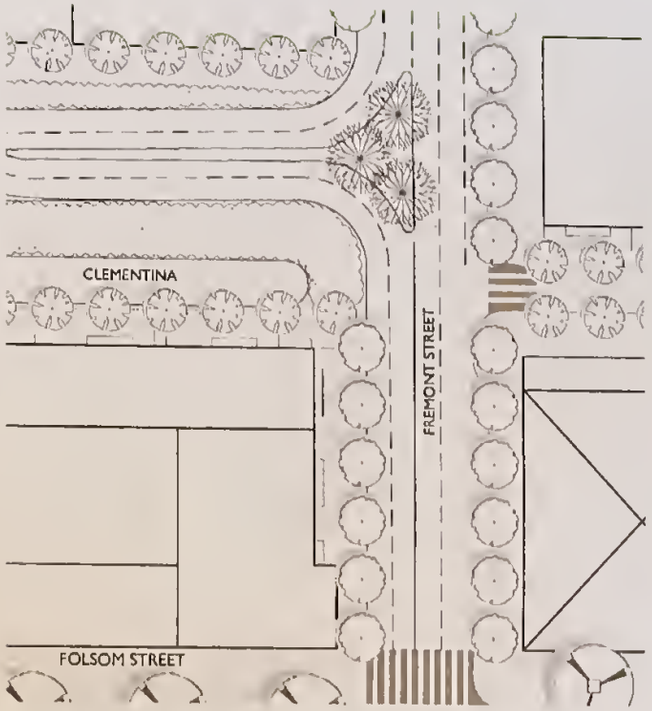
In general, bicyclists have limited facilities in the Transbay area. A bicycle lane is provided along Folsom Street and is proposed for Howard Street. However, no north-south bicycle routes are provided between Second Street and the Embarcadero. The auto-oriented nature of most streets in the area constrain bicycle activity.

Muni in South of Market

San Francisco bicyclist
Source: Courtesy of SF Bicycle Coalition



CURRENTLY PROPOSED FOLSOM OFF-RAMP CONFIGURATION



DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDED FOLSOM OFF-RAMP CONFIGURATION

Freeway Off-ramp

Modifications to the I-80 westbound off-ramp to Fremont Street are currently being planned. The current off-ramp would be reconfigured to establish a second ramp that would touch down at the intersection of Fremont and Folsom Streets. The resulting street configuration would create a major barrier to pedestrian and bicycle connections in addition to reducing the developable area of one of the publicly-owned parcels in the Project Area. Many participants in the Design for Development process and the membership of the Transbay CAC have voiced strong opposition to this proposed new ramp. Should this new ramp be constructed, its configuration and the effect of the additional vehicular traffic on Folsom Street will need to be incorporated into plans for the future Folsom Boulevard. Efforts should be made to work with the appropriate City and State agencies to revise the configuration of or to eliminate the ramp, in order to better accommodate the needs of the Transbay area.

Fremont Street off-ramp

EXHIBIT 5.4

STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES FRAMEWORK PLAN

Rebuilding of the Transbay Terminal and associated redevelopment of the Project Area present an enormous opportunity to create a legible network of open spaces and pedestrian paths. While the great neighborhoods of San Francisco all have unique and varied public open spaces, Transbay can provide a new open space paradigm with applicability throughout South of Market and other portions of eastern San Francisco that are still undergoing significant change and are challenged in their ability to provide open space and recreational facilities through traditional means.

One important foundation for the plan for streets and open spaces in Transbay is the pivotal role of this area in providing connectivity among the variety of transit facilities and other destinations of this part of the city. As illustrated in the Connectivity Concept diagram (Exhibit 5.4) certain corridors in the area are particularly important components in an area-wide system of pedestrian and bicycle linkages to serve residents, workers, and visitors. These corridors, therefore, require a special quality of improvement in order to meet this challenge.

In addition to connectivity, the Transbay area must also have an adequate supply of usable open space for its role as a downtown neighborhood. San Francisco residential neighborhoods have a variety of ways of providing open space. In most dense neighborhoods, sidewalks are relatively narrow, but include generous plantings of street trees, and open space is provided through a network of parks and playgrounds. In less dense neighborhoods, private front yards and park strips (the grassy planted area between the curb and the sidewalk) create a more generous sense of greenness; however this open space is in essence "borrowed" from the nearby homes and is supplemented with parks and playgrounds. In a few cases, a citywide or regional park provides an open space and recreation amenity to the adjoining neighborhoods, as with the panhandle area of Golden Gate Park.

In Transbay, due to the "excess capacity" of some vehicular corridors, there is an opportunity to transfer vehicular rights-of-way to the public realm of pedestrians and bicyclists, creating a linear system of usable open space, supplemented with new parks and recreation facilities. Combined, this system provides the linkages through and beyond the area to important destinations, while simultaneously creating green, usable spaces to serve the residents of Transbay.

Exhibit 5.5, the Streets and Public Spaces Framework Plan illustrates this combined system of corridors and open spaces. As shown, the Transbay public realm will include:

- Major open space — two major new parks in Transbay, one in the Rincon neighborhood, and a major new plaza at the Transbay Terminal;
- Main/Beale/Spear/Essex Street linear open spaces;
- Folsom Boulevard pedestrian promenade improvements;
- Alley additions and improvements;
- Small plazas and parks associated with new development;
- Gateway landscapes at important locations;
- Other sidewalk widenings and improvements;
- General sidewalk improvements.

EXHIBIT 5.5

STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACE FRAMEWORK PLAN
MAJOR PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
SMALL PLAZAS AND PARKS
ALLEY IMPROVEMENTS
FOLSOM BOULEVARD
GATEWAY LANDSCAPE
MAIN / BEALE / SPEAR / ESSEX WIDENINGS
OTHER SIDEWALK WIDENINGS
GENERAL SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS
PROJECT AREA BOUNDARY
N
FERRY PLAZA
FERRY BUILDING
JUSTIN HERMANN PLAZA
SAN FRANCISCO BAY
STEUART ST
RINCON PARK
BAY BRIDGE
MARKET ST
STEVENSON ST
JESSIE ST
MISSION ST
MINNA ST
SHAW
ANTHONY ST
NATOMA ST
HOWARD ST
SPEAR ST
MAIN ST
BEALE ST
FREMONT ST
FOLSOM
GUY PL
LANSING ST
HARRISON ST
ISHAM ST
CLEMENTINA
OSCAR
MALDEN
ECKER
ESSEX ST
2ND ST
HAWTHORNE ST
3RD ST
BRYANT ST
BRANNAN ST
THE EMBARCADERO
CRUISE SHIP TERMINAL
BRANNAN STREET WHARF PARK
SOUTH PARK

Proposed Public Open Spaces

As shown in the Proposed Public Open Space Plan (Exhibit S.6), two new neighborhood parks will be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Project Area. These will provide usable outdoor space and will complement the system of public open space that exists in other nearby parts of the city.

These neighborhood parks are located in zones where housing will be focused and where no parks or open space currently exist: the residential land use zone, framed by Main, Beale, and Folsom Streets, and the Mixed-Use Historic District, east of Second Street. While these sites will not be large enough to accommodate ball fields or other large-scale active recreation, they will provide a mix of neighborhood open spaces and smaller scale recreation facilities, similar to that found in many high-density San Francisco neighborhoods, including North Beach, Russian Hill, and Telegraph Hill.

Public Open Space Requirements

- Add two new parks in Transbay.
- Provide additional recreation facilities near and under Terminal ramps.
- Create a major civic plaza space at the new Transbay Terminal.

Lafayette Square

Sydney Walton Park

South Park

Levi Plaza

The plan includes approximately 112,000 square feet of public open space, including the two public parks, the retail mews, and one-half of the width of the widened sidewalks along Main and Beale Streets between Folsom and Howard Street. In addition, all of the blocks north of Folsom Street and between Main and Beale Street will include shared private open space for the residents of each block. This space totals approximately 51,000 square feet. Thus the plan includes a total of 163,000 square feet, about 3.75 acres of public and shared private open space, or approximately 80 square feet per new residential unit planned for the Project Area. Note that this total does not include all of the recreational space planned for areas under the terminal and freeway ramps. In addition, each new residential development will be required to provide additional shared private open space in the form or roof decks or podium terraces as part of an open space plan for each block.

EXHIBIT 5.6

One new park, Transbay Square, is located just north of Folsom Street, bounded by Main and Beale Streets. Similar in size to Sydney Walton Park, this park will be a well-landscaped, informally designed park frequented by nearby residents and workers alike. Framed by residential uses with front doors opening onto the park area, this park will be primarily oriented towards passive recreation activities and will be an integral neighborhood amenity.

A second park, Oscar Park, and associated recreation facilities will be provided to the west, in the Mixed-Use Historic District along the alignment of a new lane extending north from Essex Street and utilizing the space under the freeway and Terminal ramps. This area lends itself to two types of space: 1) an informally designed passive recreation green park space and 2) active community recreation facilities, such as basketball courts, skateboard facilities, and a children's play area. In addition, there is adequate space for an indoor recreation building that might be developed and managed by the developers/owners of adjacent properties, so as to minimize city expenditures. The ultimate configuration of these facilities will need to be determined in conjunction with the final structural design of the ramps leading to the Transbay Terminal.

A third park is shown at the top of Rincon Hill on land currently publicly-owned. The Planning Department has proposed developing this vacant land into a park, which would significantly enhance open space amenities for the Rincon Hill and Transbay neighborhoods.

A major civic plaza, Terminal Plaza, is shown adjoining the Transbay Terminal on the Mission Street side. The Plaza will serve as an entry to the Terminal and as a major civic space.

Streetscape Improvements

Throughout the Transbay district, the street environment is poor, with few street trees, little in the way of pedestrian amenities, sidewalks that are cracked or in disrepair, and no pedestrian street lighting. Significant improvements to the sidewalk environment are needed and will be planned as a part of the redevelopment of the area.

However, conditions in the Project Area represent a unique opportunity to expand the public realm of open space and the pedestrian environment beyond the existing sidewalks. Very wide streets exist throughout the neighborhood. While on some streets this width is needed in order to accommodate the volumes of traffic associated with commute movements into and out of the city, on other streets the existing width is not required, and in essence, excess capacity exists. This excess capacity can be put to use through widened sidewalks, in effect returning more space to the pedestrian from the automobile zone. Exhibit 5.7 illustrates the system of improved streetscape and public connections planned for the Project Area. Following is a discussion of the various elements and examples of the improvements that would be made. Examples of these street and connection improvements can also be found in Part Two within the specific subdistrict sections.

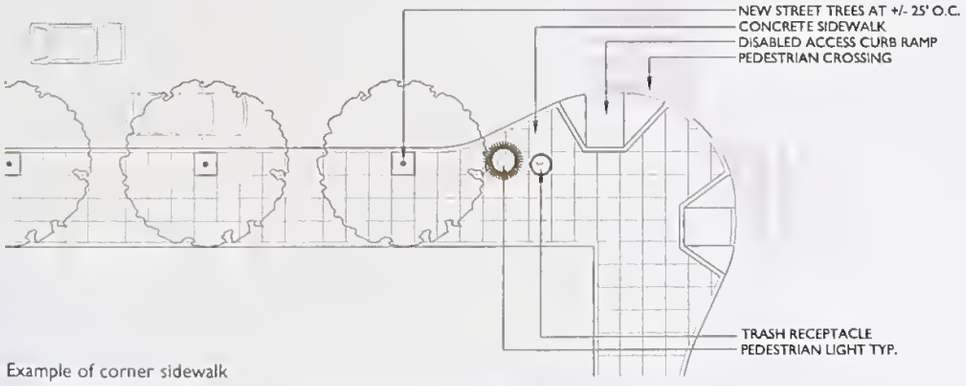
Streetscape Requirements

- Widen sidewalks by eliminating roadway "excess capacity," a lane of traffic and/or converting a travel lane to a parking lane with peak hour tow-away, whenever possible.
- Provide corner widenings or extensions, wherever not precluded by required vehicular turning movements, to minimize street crossings.
- Expand the existing system of alleys for better pedestrian connectivity.
- Beautify sidewalks and other pedestrian spaces and include extensive pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture, trees, and public art.
- Improve lighting along all streets, sidewalks, pedestrian connections, and on private property for safety and comfort.
- Configure land uses and provide multiple building entries along sidewalks to contribute to sidewalk activity.
- Use permeable surfaces throughout new streetscapes to reduce rainwater runoff.

Throughout the Project Area, the sidewalk environment will be improved. Even those sidewalks that cannot be widened, such as Second Street and portions of other streets, will include a variety of improvements, such as pedestrian lighting, street furniture, and trees, to greatly increase pedestrian comfort and ease of movement.

Widened sidewalks provide space for outdoor cafe dining.

Corner widenings improve pedestrian crossing safety.



Example of corner sidewalk

Sidewalk furnishing can include planting, street furniture, lighting, and trees.

Street trees provide shade and moderate the scale of the street.

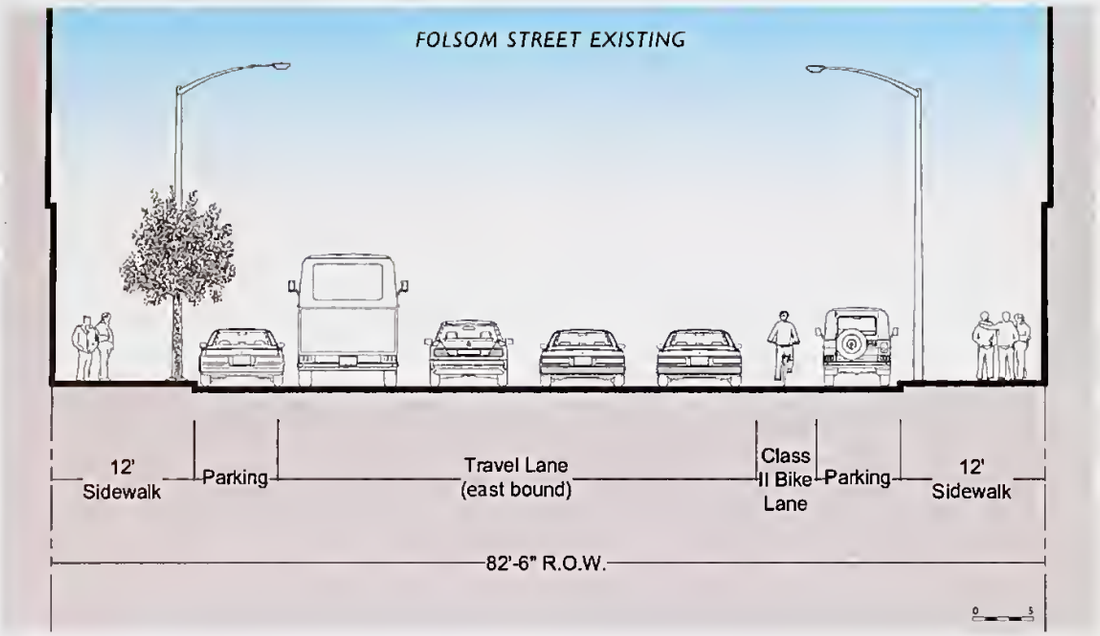
Sidewalk cafes and retail can utilize wide sidewalks.

Folsom Boulevard

Folsom Street has been identified as a location for a special pedestrian right-of-way that will allow it to act as a "main street" of this new neighborhood and will provide an active link to the waterfront along the Embarcadero. It also will provide excellent views to the waterfront throughout most of the Transbay area. While Folsom Street must carry significant traffic volumes, opportunities to expand the pedestrian realm of the sidewalks exist that will allow Folsom Street to be a special pedestrian promenade, called Folsom Boulevard.

Streetscape and open space improvements on Folsom Boulevard will complement the high public character of this street and its uses. Based on the results of the the traffic analysis conducted for the Transbay EIR/EIS, three eastbound lanes will be necessary on Folsom Street. However, it will be possible to extend westbound Folsom Street for two additional blocks (from Main Street to Fremont Street) to enhance local circulation and access to the new residential and commercial uses. Either configuration will include parking on both sides to support retail businesses and to buffer pedestrians from traffic. An eastbound bicycle lane will also be provided. On the north side of the street, a 15-foot setback zone exists at the eastern and western ends of the study area. Due to the preponderance of vacant, publicly-owned parcels along this edge of Folsom, this 15-foot setback will be continued throughout the length of the street roughly from the Embarcadero to the ramp overpass at Essex Street. This setback provides an important opportunity to significantly expand the sidewalk environment along the Boulevard.

Two alternative configurations of the proposed Boulevard are illustrated. Technical and cost considerations will need to be considered for each, prior to final design.



Median Configuration

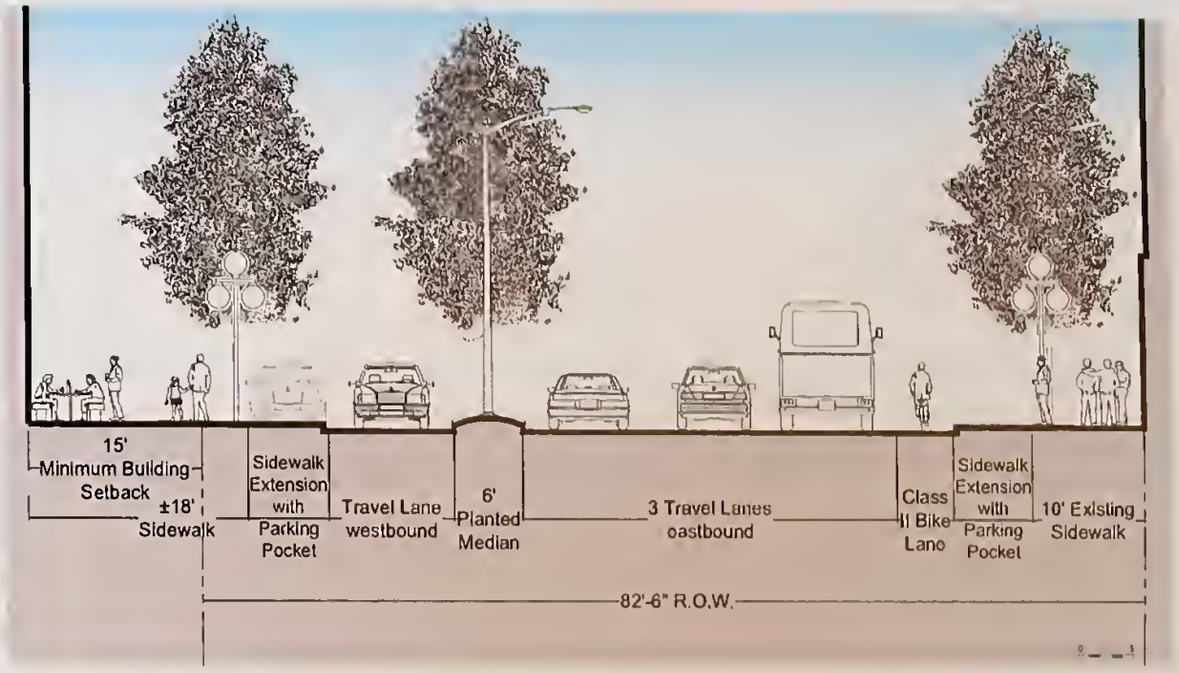
In the first alternative, a tree-lined median will be added between the eastbound and westbound lanes, making for a more sheltered and human-scale environment north of the median and giving a grander look to Folsom Boulevard. The street and parking area between the median and sidewalk curb would be detailed as part of the pedestrian realm to calm traffic. This creates a 17- to 20-foot sidewalk on the north side (it accommodated by the 15-foot building setback and slightly narrower travel lane widths), an ample width on this sunny side of the street for extensive landscaping, furnishings, and room for businesses and cafes. The median treatment would create a distinctive character and identity for Folsom Boulevard. As with any streetscape enhancements, it should be noted that there are technical issues with the maintenance of any planted median that need to be addressed in a future study.

This median configuration could, at a later date, be converted to a symmetric configuration compatible with the potential new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that has been discussed for Folsom Boulevard. (This long-term concept requires a broader analysis of street changes for the Downtown Neighborhoods not contained in the Transbay EIS/EIR, and as a result, is not proposed in this plan, though the potential is recognized.)

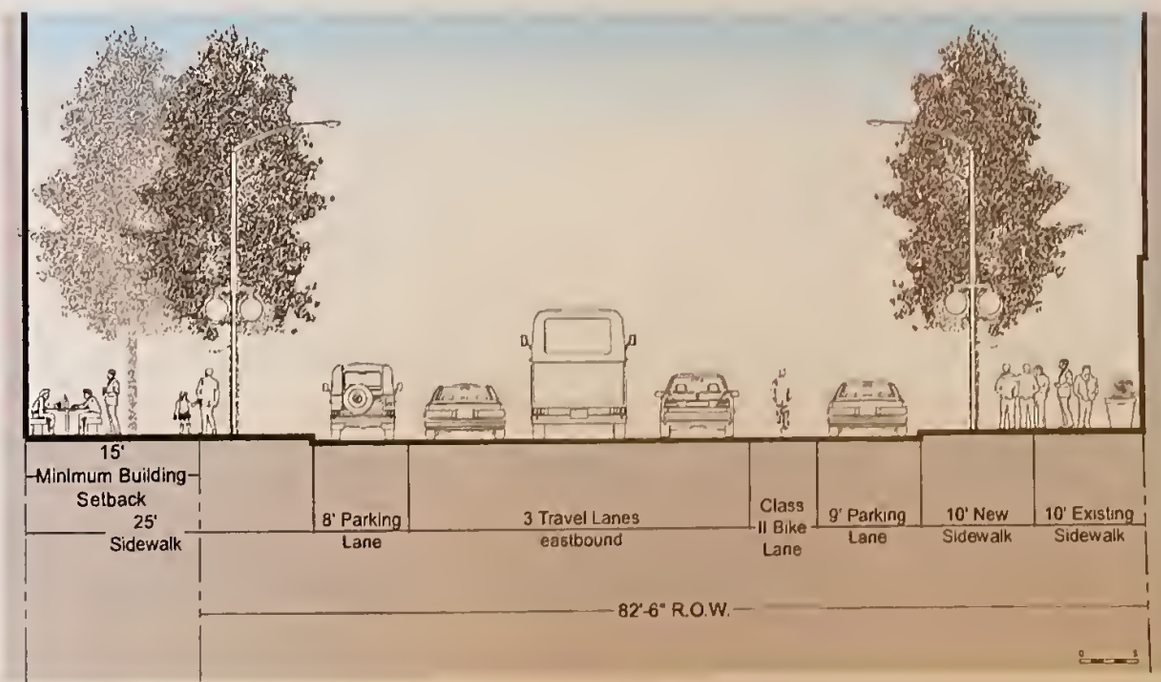
Equal Sidewalks Widening Configuration

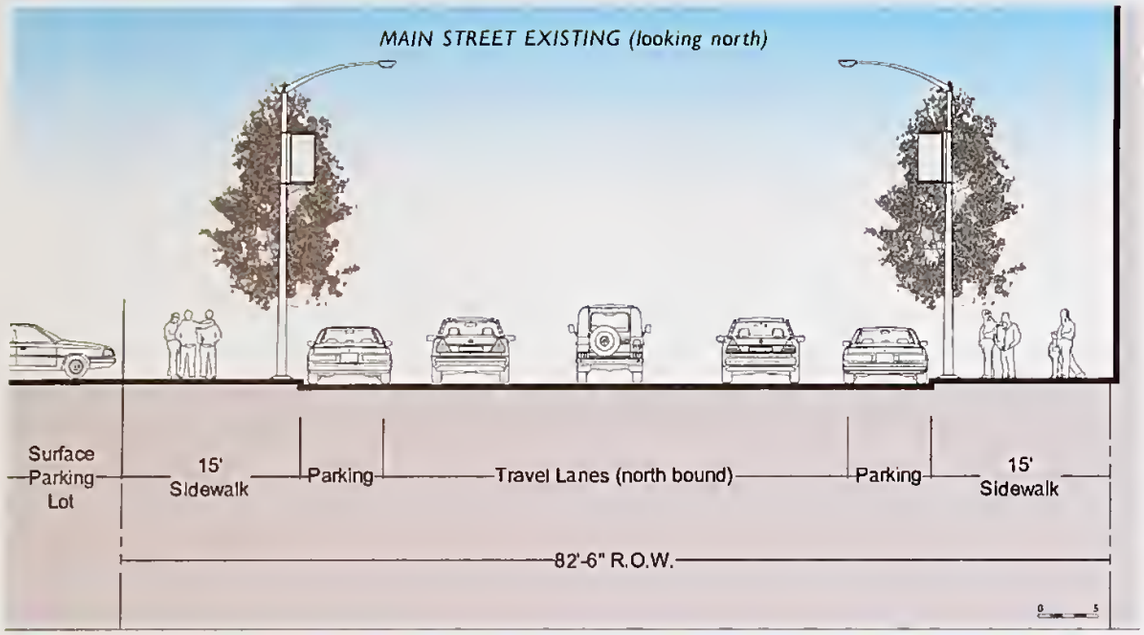
In the second alternative, the sidewalks will be widened on both sides of the Boulevard. The 15-foot north side setback enables the creation of a generous 22-foot sidewalk on this sunny side of the Boulevard for pedestrian and commercial activity. The southern sidewalk, while not within the Project Area, could also be widened to around 16 feet and can be furnished with lighting, street trees, seating, and other amenities.

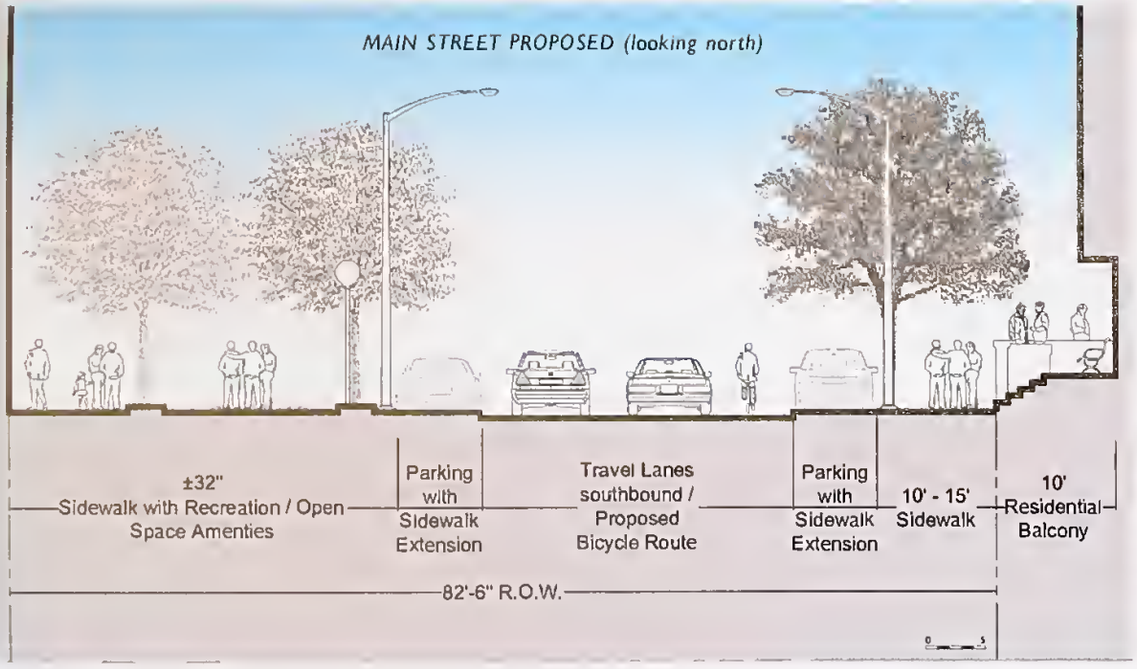
ALTERNATIVE ONE:
FOLSOM BOULEVARD (WITH MEDIAN)



ALTERNATIVE TWO:
FOLSOM STREET WITHOUT MEDIAN







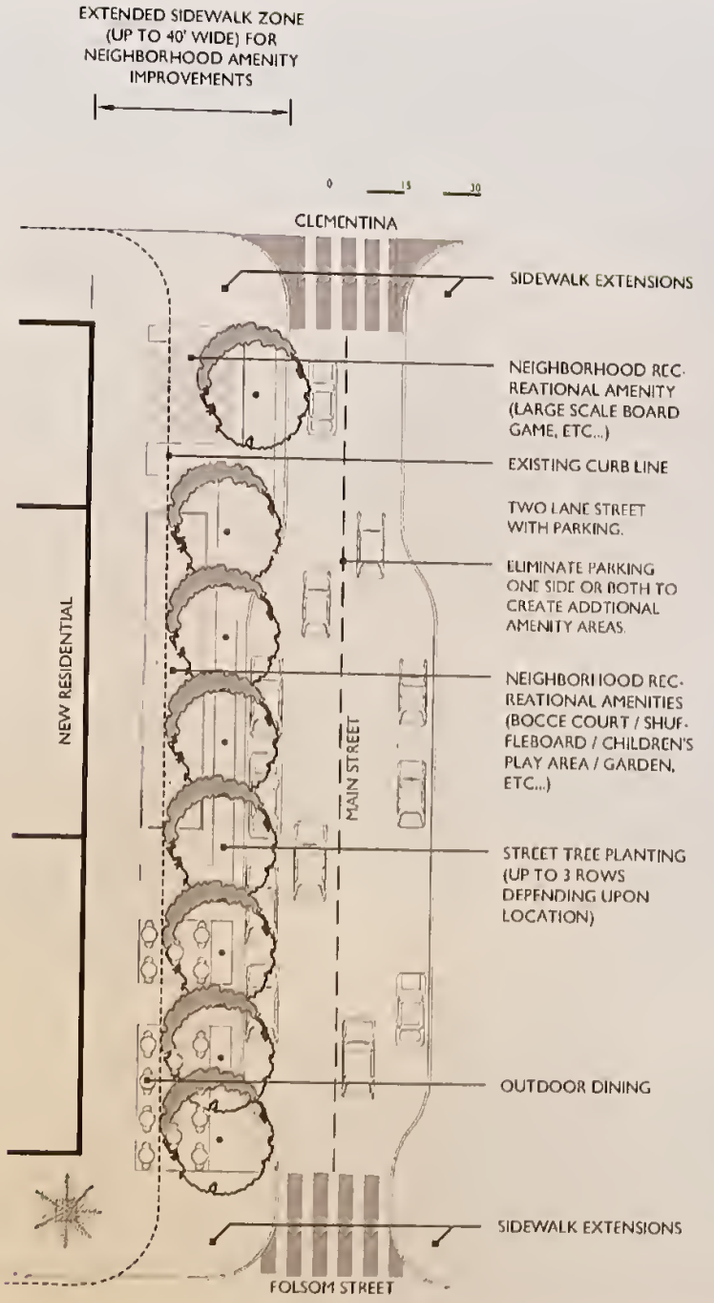
Main, Beale and Spear Streets

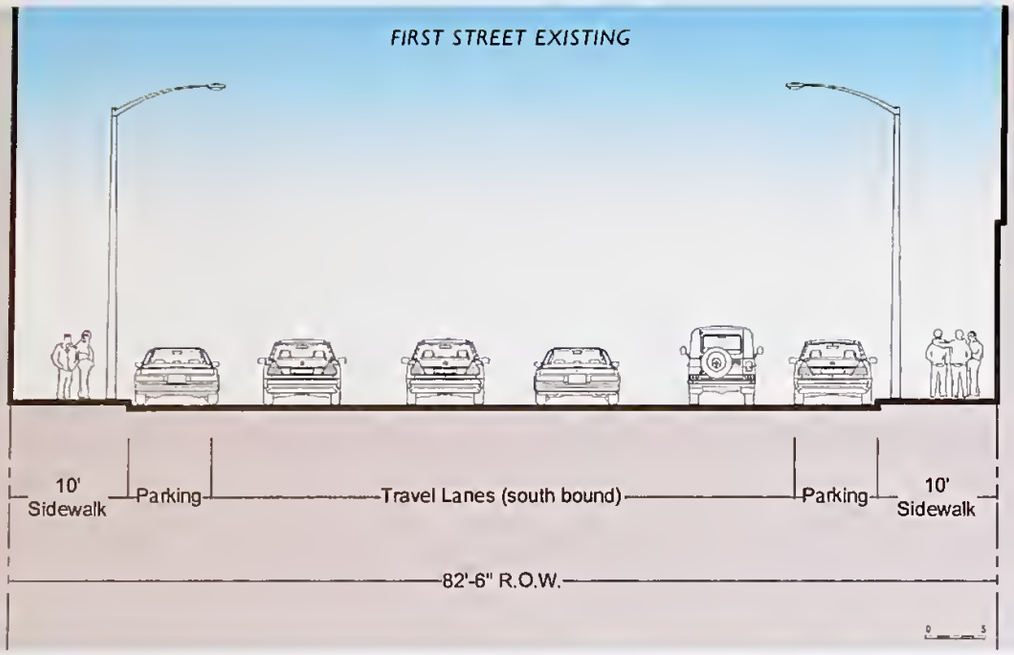
Main, Beale and Spear Streets present a special opportunity to create a unique, public open space type that can be a prototype for similar, developing areas of the city. As discussed earlier, excess capacity within the vehicular roadway allows a transfer of space to bicycle use and to the sidewalks. A bicycle route is provided on these slow neighborhood streets in widened, shared lanes. The sidewalk on one side will be widened to as much as 32 feet (with the other sidewalk configured at a generous 10–15 feet), creating a special sidewalk environment that provides usable open space, a linear public realm. As much as 24 feet of sidewalk width can function as this neighborhood open space. Within this zone a variety of uses can fit: tot lots, gardens, bocci ball courts, and large-scale chess boards. In areas of ground floor retail uses, this zone can also be used for sidewalk dining or floral/market displays.

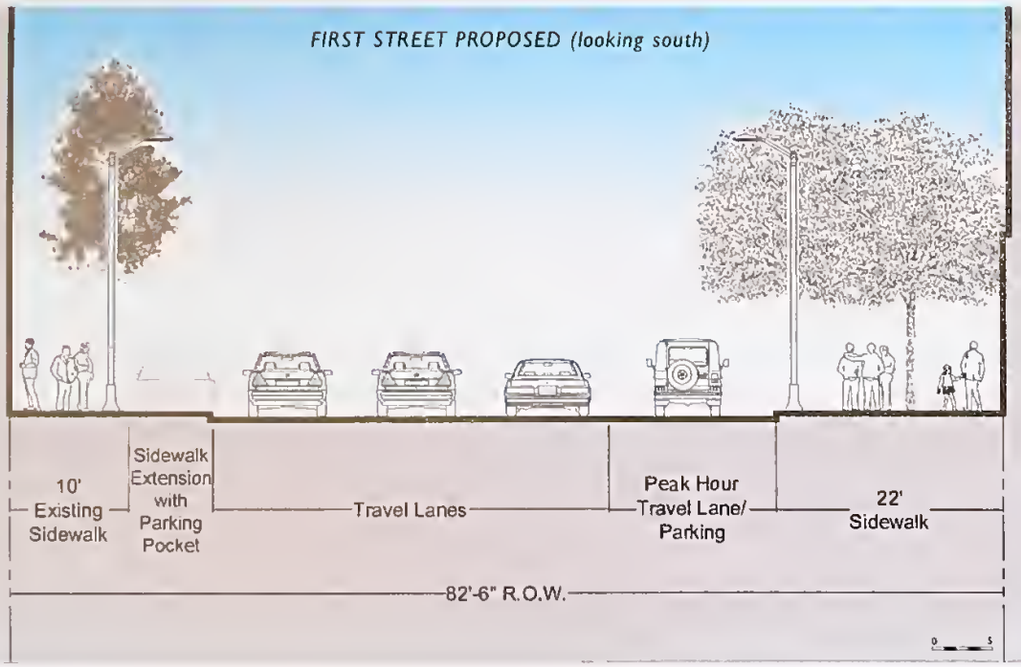
A significant number of housing units will adjoin these streets and will, therefore, enjoy this unique, public open space resource and improved bicycle facilities. These streets are also the primary connectors from the Financial District to South Beach and the Embarcadero waterfront, where important

Main Street existing (looking north)

A variety of treatments and activities can be used on the expanded sidewalk zone of Main, Beale, and Spear Streets.







open space and activity destinations, such as Pacific Bell Park, are located. These improvements can also link into and through the Rincon Hill neighborhood, providing continuous enhanced circulation and open space for this emerging high-density residential neighborhood.

This concept of the linear public realm of green and activity is a prototype that has applicability throughout evolving areas of eastern San Francisco, where streets may not need to accommodate high traffic volumes and where this invaluable public resource can be returned to the public for use as open space.

First Street

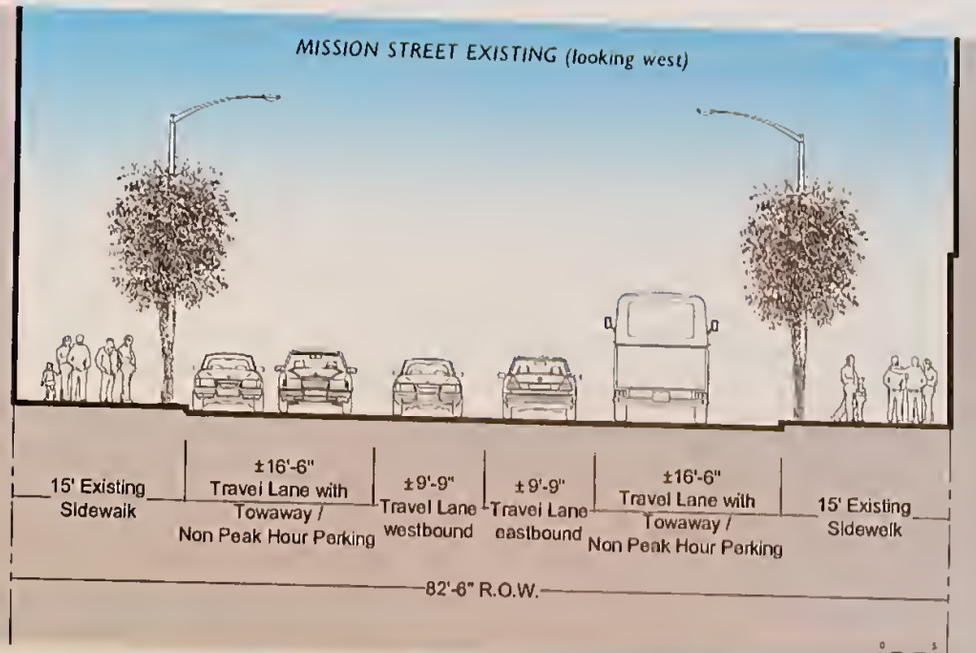
As the First Street cross-section illustrates, widened sidewalks will facilitate north-south movements toward the Terminal to the north and Rincon Hill to the south. While First Street carries high traffic volumes in peak hours, it can have widened sidewalks in some locations on one side for an improved pedestrian environment. Sidewalk widening is achieved by removing the parking lane on one side and converting an existing travel lane to a travel/tow-away lane, where parking will be allowed in off-peak hours. This configuration is provided on First Street, wherever possible, while meeting other needs, such as turning movements.

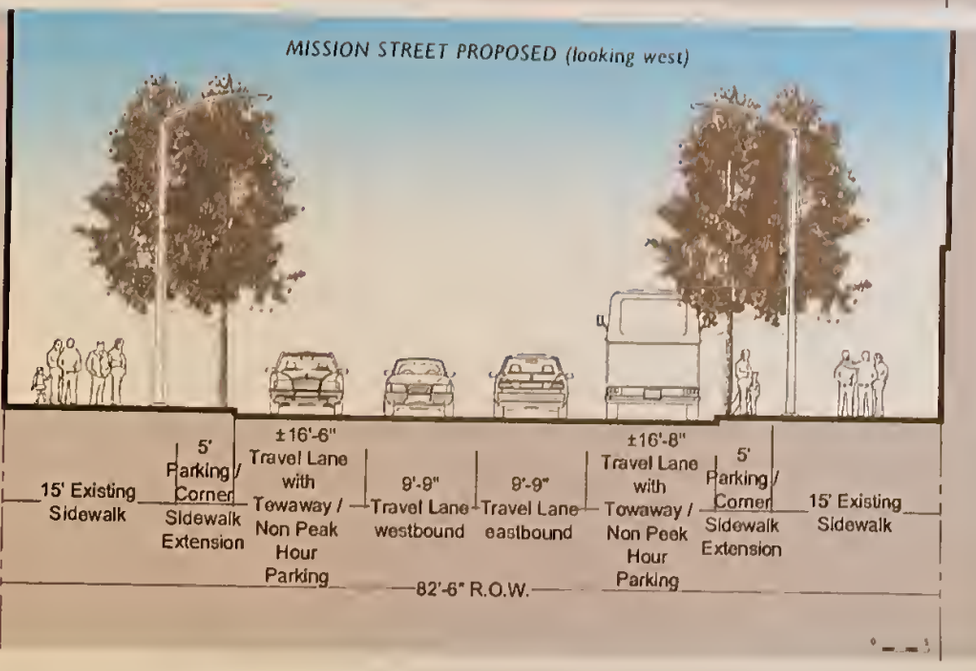
First Street, looking south.

Mission Street

Mission Street is one of the most important transit corridors in San Francisco and will have increased importance as the Terminal expands. Due to the concentration of traffic and bus stops here and the desirability of retaining parking, Mission Street cannot easily be narrowed in a continuous fashion to provide for an enhanced pedestrian environment. However, due to the wide configuration of the right hand travel lane (which allows parking in non-peak hours), in some locations, sidewalks can be widened up to five feet at intersections to facilitate pedestrian crossing movements and to provide a limited amount of additional sidewalk space. The entire Mission Street corridor within and outside of the Project Area should be improved with pedestrian amenities, such as street trees, special pedestrian lighting, and street furnishings, in acknowledgement of this street's importance and role.

Mission Street today, looking west.





Alley Improvement Plan

Unlike other parts of the city, Transbay will be characterized by an extensive system of improved alleys that will provide greatly enhanced pedestrian connections north-south and east-west throughout the district.

A special type of pedestrian connection will be provided in the Project Area. While alleys exist throughout San Francisco, they are particularly prevalent in the Transbay and South of Market zones. These alleys provide enhanced options for pedestrian circulation and break up the scale of the urban blocks, especially where block sizes are unusually large, such as between Second and First Streets. While in some locations the alleys must also provide access for service and parking, in many locations they can be primarily pedestrian zones and can be closed to allow full use of the right-of-way for café seating or special events. In some locations, they will also be front door addresses for residential units. The alleys, therefore, need a high level of streetscape treatment and pedestrian amenities.

There are two primary considerations in the design of the alleys. Where vehicle access will predominate, curbs should be provided for pedestrian safety and to control vehicular movements. Where pedestrians will predominate, a configuration without curbs but with bollards can be used. In all cases, street trees, furnishings, such as seating, and pedestrian-scale lighting will be provided.

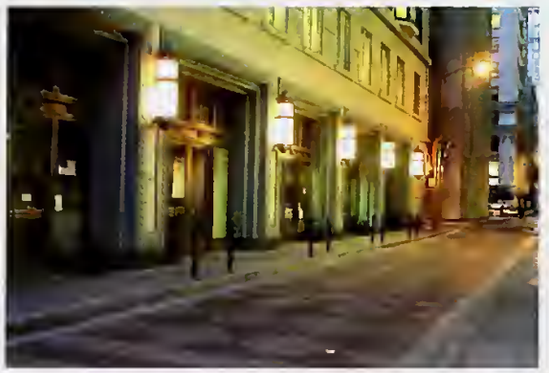
Exhibit S.8 provides a key to the appropriate treatment of various alleys in the Project Area. As shown in the diagram there are four general configurations for alleys corresponding to their functional roles:

- *Pedestrian-only alleys*: These alleys are not required for vehicular access and can therefore be devoted to pedestrian use.
- *Shared pedestrian/vehicular alleys*: These alleys will accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians.
- *Vehicular-primary alleys*: These alleys will have significant vehicular traffic for service and/or parking access.

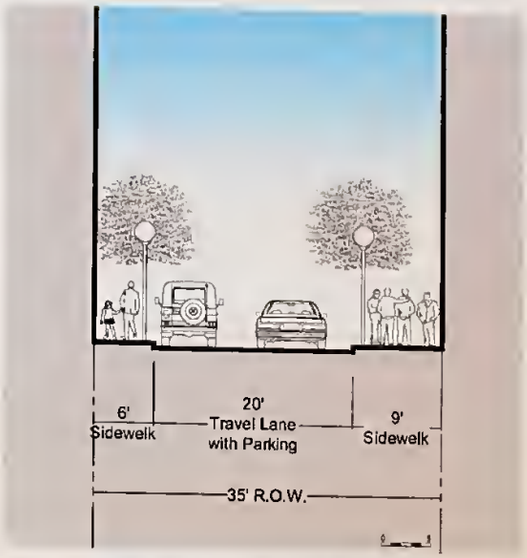
The diagram also indicates those alleys on which curbs will be provided to separate vehicles and pedestrians. Also shown are locations where the street configuration will be asymmetrical, in order to provide a wider pedestrian area adjacent to certain uses or on the sunnier side of the street.

Alley Improvement Requirements

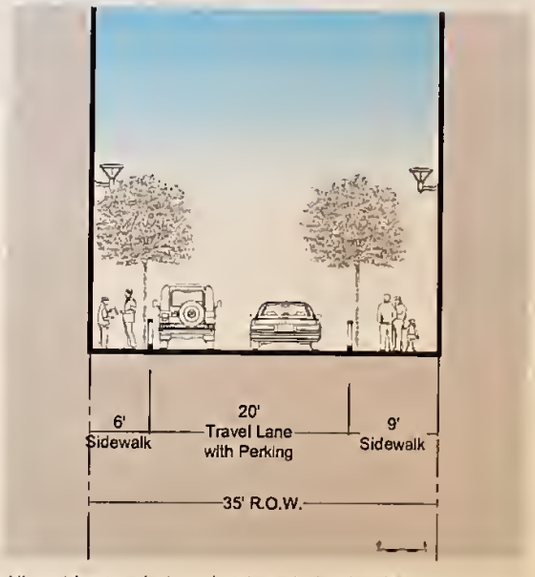
- Extend Clementina Street to the east.
- Create a new, continuous alley alignment from Folsom Boulevard to Mission Street along the Oscar/Shaw alley alignment.
- Improve all alleys to encourage pedestrian and bicycle use.
- Use alternative paving materials in alley designs.



Existing pedestrian alleys in San Francisco.



Typical alley with curbs and asymmetrical layout.



Alley without curbs in pedestrian-priority situations.

Vehicular Circulation

To accommodate the proposed development in the Project Area, enhancements to the local transportation network are essential. Most of the streets in the area are focused towards private vehicular uses, and as configured cannot adequately address transit, pedestrian, and bicyclist needs. Strategies for improving the vehicular circulation network in Transbay include:

- Retaining capacity on First, Fremont, and Mission Streets, and on portions of Howard, Folsom and Beale Streets to support their roles as important vehicular commute corridors;
- Reducing excess capacity on Main, Beale and Spear Streets to provide additional useable open space in the sidewalk areas and additional right-of-way for bicyclists;
- Extending and adding alleys in the area to improve local vehicular access and to enhance to the pedestrian and bicycle network;
- Evaluating lane widths and reducing to the minimum needed to safely accommodate transit and vehicular traffic;
- Retain parking wherever possible, especially adjacent to retail uses.

In the long-term, there is an important opportunity to convert streets within the Project Area from one-way to two-way operation. In areas of predominantly residential use, this would help to calm traffic and improve ease of access. These improvements, however, have implications for citywide circulation and will need to be studied further at a later date. However, the impacts of establishing new alleys and of extending the two-way operation of Folsom Boulevard were evaluated as part of this study, and found to be feasible.

By reducing the width of the street right-of-way, it will be possible to add space to the sidewalks and/or to create additional bicycle facilities. These improvements will be most valuable on streets adjacent to residential areas and on streets that provide pedestrian access to the Terminal and Market Street.

However, it will be important that sufficient capacity is maintained on the streets to accommodate the morning and evening commute traffic. In addition, it will be important that on-street parking is preserved, especially near retail and commercial areas.

To accommodate new development, the local circulation network throughout the Project Area will also need improvement. Since most of the blocks are relatively large and the street network predominately consists of one-way streets, access for residents and visitors is difficult and circuitous. As a result, new north/south and east/west alleyways will be established. Folsom Street should be extended as a two-way street further west of Essex Street, which will also improve access.

It should be noted that all proposed changes to the roadway network, such as reduction in travel lanes, creation of sidewalk bulbs, and revisions to on-street parking regulations, will need to be evaluated and approved by the appropriate City agencies (including the Department of Parking and Traffic, the Department of Public Works, the Planning Department, and Muni).

High traffic volumes during commute hours create congestion for hours along First, Fremont, and Folsom Streets (above and below).

Wide, underutilized streets have excess capacity during midday, non-commute hours (above).

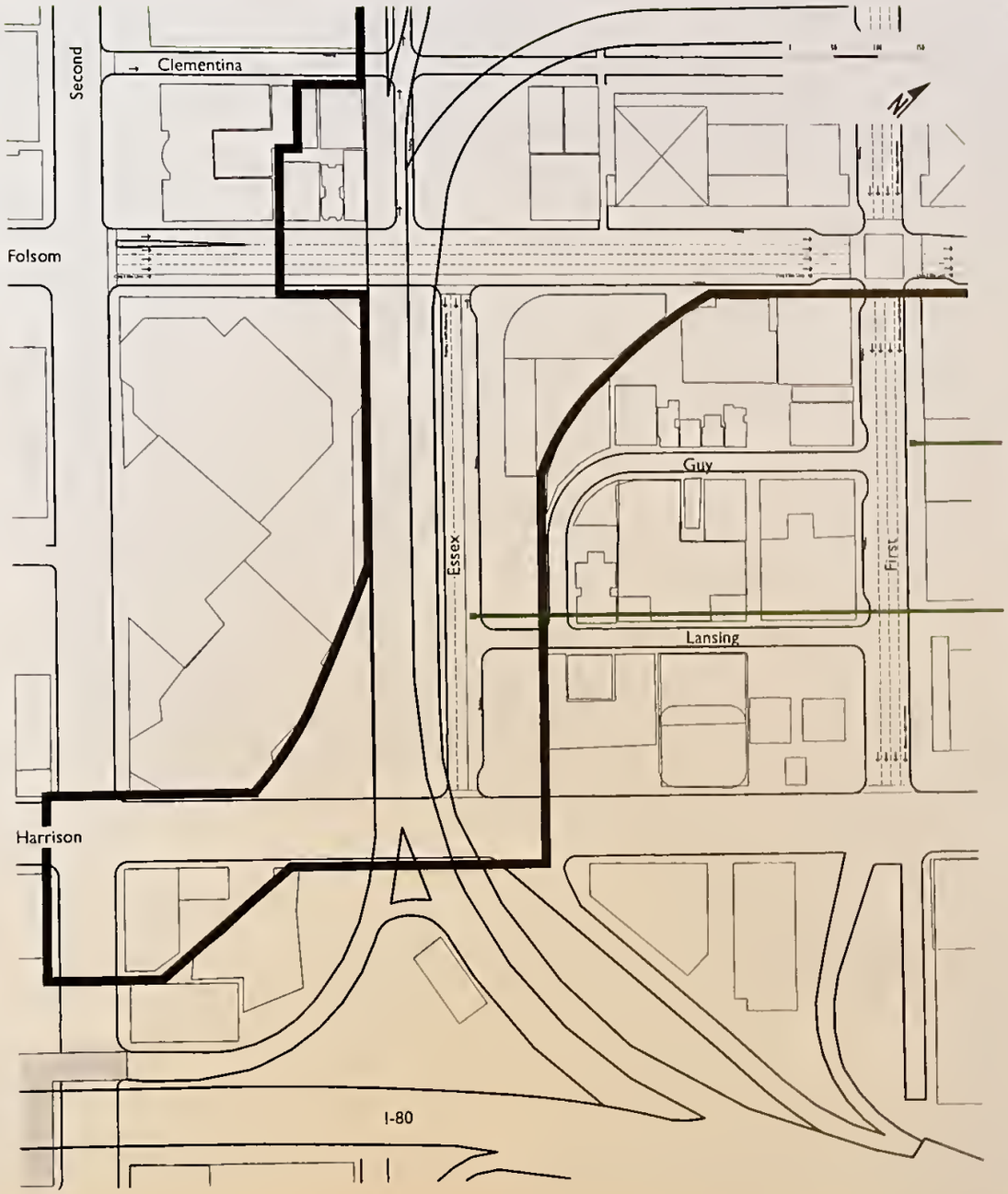
Circulation Requirements

- Reduce the amount of street right-of-way dedicated to vehicular circulation and use the additional space to enhance pedestrian and/or bicycle facilities.
- Coordinate bicycle, pedestrian, transit and taxi circulation with the detailed Transbay Terminal design to ensure convenient and safe access to this facility.
- Facilitate pedestrian and vehicular access into and through large blocks and extend the pattern of small, mid-block alleys that exist in the area.

The following are the proposed changes to the local streets in the study area (see Exhibit 5.10):

- *Spear Street*: eliminate one southbound travel lane between Howard and Harrison Streets;
- *Main Street*: eliminate one northbound travel lane between Mission and Folsom Streets;
- *First Street*: eliminate one southbound travel lane between Howard and Harrison Streets, and establish one southbound peak-period tow-away lane;
- *Essex Street*: eliminate one northbound travel lane and one southbound travel lane between Folsom and Harrison Streets, and establish one southbound peak-period tow-away lane;
- *Howard Street*: eliminate one eastbound travel lane between Fremont Street and the Embarcadero;
- *Folsom Street*: eliminate one eastbound travel lane between First and Main Streets, and establish one westbound travel lane between Fremont and Main Streets;
- *Alleys*: establish extensions of existing alleys for both vehicular and pedestrian use at Shaw, Oscar, Clementina and Tehama Alleys (Ecker and Malden Alleys will also have extensions for pedestrian access).

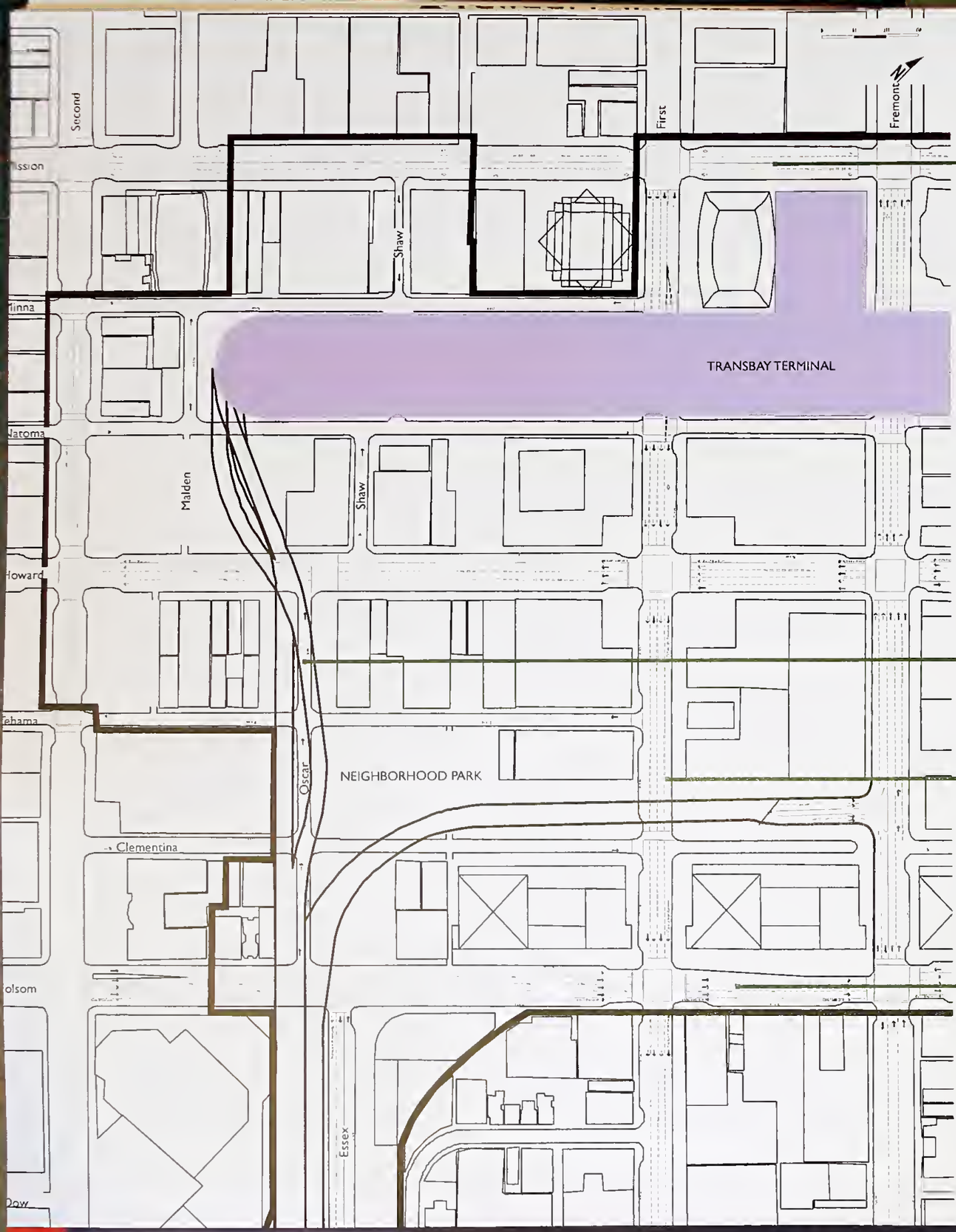
Detailed plans are shown on the following pages illustrating the lane, sidewalk, and crossing configurations of all streets in Transbay.



Street, Sidewalk and Crossing Detail: Southwestern Portion of Study Area

FIRST STREET:
ELIMINATE EXISTING PARKING EAST SIDE
WIDEN SIDEWALK AND ESTABLISH PEAK PERIOD PARKING /TOW AWAY LANE

ELIMINATE ONE NORTHBOUND THROUGH TRAVEL LANE ON ESSEX, ESTABLISH PEAK PERIOD TOW-AWAY LANE ON SOUTHBOUND ESSEX
WIDEN SIDEWALK EAST SIDE



Street, Sidewalk ond Crossing Detail: Western Portion of Study Areo

PARTIAL BUILB OUTS CORNERS ONLY ON MISSION STREET

NEW NORTHBOUND THROUGH ALLEY (OSCAR) BETWEEN FOLSOM AND HOWARD.

FIRST STREET (SOUTH OF HOWARD): ELIMINATE EXISTING PARKING ON EAST SIDE, ESTABLISH PEAK PERIOD TOW AWAY LANE

TRANSITION FOLSOM FROM FOUR LANES EASTBOUND TO THREE LANES EASTBOUND BETWEEN FIRST AND FREMONT.

Street, Sidewalk and Crossing Detail: Eastern Portion of Study Area.

PARTIAL BULB OUTS CORNERS ONLY ON MISSION STREET

ESTABLISH NEW PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MEDIAN AS ALTERNATIVE PATH OF TRAVEL AT MUNI BUS ENTRANCE TO TRANSBAY TERMINAL

CREATE PEDESTRIAN-ONLY ALLEY BETWEEN BEALE AND FREMONT ON NATOMA

ELIMINATE ONE SOUTHBOUND THROUGH TRAVEL LANE ON SPEAR STREET. WIDEN SIDEWALK TO +30'

ELIMINATE PARKING, WIDEN SIDEWALK

ELIMINATE ONE EASTBOUND THROUGH TRAVEL LANE ON HOWARD BETWEEN MAIN AND STUART

ELIMINATE ONE EASTBOUND THROUGH LANE ON HOWARD STREET BETWEEN BEALE AND MAIN

ELIMINATE ONE NORTHBOUND THROUGH TRAVEL LANE ON MAIN STREET. WIDEN SIDEWALK TO +30'

NEW TEHAMA ALLEY BETWEEN BEALE AND MAIN

ELIMINATE PARKING LANE ON BEALE BETWEEN HOWARD AND FOLSOM. WIDEN SIDEWALK

ELIMINATE PARKING EAST SIDE ON FREMONT BETWEEN HOWARD AND CLEMENTINA. WIDEN SIDEWALK

OFF-RAMP RECONFIGURED TO PROVIDE 90 DEGREE CONNECTION TO FREMONT

EXTEND CLEMENTINA BETWEEN FREMONT AND SPEAR

EXTEND WESTBOUND LANE FROM BEALE STREET TO FREMONT STREET. ELIMINATE EASTBOUND THROUGH TRAVEL LANE EAST OF FREMONT

Parking Treatment

Attention to parking location and treatment will be an important component in transforming the Transbay area into a livable neighborhood with vibrant streetscapes. Currently, most of the on-street and off-street parking in the area is used by commuters or for longer-term parking.

On Street Parking

To meet the parking demands of visitors, there will be a combination of short-term (30 minute) and mid-term (1-hour to 2-hour) on-street spaces. Meters will be required, and the establishment of residential permit parking areas will be discouraged. Also, passenger loading spaces (white zones) and delivery spaces (yellow zones) will be established to improve access to buildings and to reduce the potential for double parking. In order for the maximum number of on-street spaces to be provided, curb cuts for new buildings (to access off-street parking and/or loading facilities) will be combined and minimized, where possible (See Exhibit 5.11). It should be noted that carpool/vanpool pick-up locations and parking spaces are currently located along Main and Beale Streets. These spaces will be maintained, or replaced with similar facilities in the area.

Off Street Parking

In accordance with the city's "Transit First" policy (see Appendix 1), the provision of off-street parking should be carefully managed to encourage travel by foot, bicycle and transit. Within new developments, the cost of parking spaces should be separate from the cost of the residential units or commercial spaces. This concept, known as "unbundling," means that owners and tenants who do not wish to have a parking space would not be required to pay for a parking space. As a result, the residential units would be more affordable to non-car owners. In addition, the extra costs associated with having a parking space may encourage residents to reduce their auto ownership. Finally, any unused spaces could be made available to other area residents who may not have on-site parking.

To further reduce the demand for parking spaces, car sharing programs will be encouraged for each building. By having vehicles available to use for errands or short visits, it will be easier for residents to not own a car. In addition, other means to reduce the demand for auto ownership will be required of new development, such as the establishment of shuttles, dedicated carpools, local car rental services, taxi facilities, and substantial secure bicycle parking. Access to off-street parking and loading facilities should not be located on major residential or commercial streets or on streets with substantial pedestrian volumes. It will be preferable for access to be located on alleyways or minor streets, wherever possible.

Parking Requirements

- Provide alternatives to private automobile use by encouraging developments that promote car sharing, shuttles, carpooling, public transit, car rental services, taxi service, bicycle parking and other alternatives to the privately-owned automobile.
- Promote short-term parking facilities for patrons of local businesses and institutions and shared parking for residents.
- Require parking to be unbundled from commercial and residential leases and ownership, and limit parking ratio to no more than 1:1.
- Minimize the number and size of curb cuts in new developments to one per block and require common vehicular access for adjacent sites, where feasible.
- Minimize conflicts between transit and vehicular access to buildings and truck loading zones.

PROPOSED PARKING AND LOADING ACCESS
TERMINAL
PARKING ENTRANCES/EXITS *
PROJECT AREA BOUNDARY
* development on irregular parcels and adjacent regular blocks will share one common garage
STEUART ST
RINCON PARK
MARKET ST
STEVENSON ST
JESSIE ST
MISSION ST
MINNA ST
SHAW ALY
ANTHONY ST
NATOMA ST
HOWARD ST
TEHAMA ST
CLEMENTINA ST
ECKER ALY
FOLSOM ST
MALDEN ALY
OSCAR ALY
GUY PLACE
LANSING ST
1ST ST
HARRISON ST
ESSEX ST
2ND ST
HAWTHORNE ST
FREMONT ST
BEALE ST
MAIN ST
SPEAR ST
BRYANT ST

EXHIBIT 5.12

Transit Framework Plan

With the new Transbay Terminal, transit activity will be substantially increased, especially along Mission, Beale and Fremont Streets. In addition, new development in the area will result in an increase in local and regional transit demand. Pedestrian and bicycle access to the main transit terminals (including Transbay Terminal, Ferry Building, Embarcadero BART/Muni station and the new Pier 30/32 cruise terminal) will be enhanced, and bus stops will be improved to enhance their attractiveness, safety and functionality (see Exhibit S.12).

Enhancements to Muni facilities and operations

To accommodate changes to Muni bus routing with the new Terminal, dedicated transit lanes could be established along Mission, Beale and Fremont Streets. In addition, it will possible to improve transit operations for local bus lines by providing transit preferential street treatments and bus stop enhancements, such as bus bulbs and new shelters. These improvements can also be applied to future bus line extensions into the Project Area.

New Muni light rail line

As part of its long-range planning effort, Muni is considering establishing a new Geary Corridor light rail line. It is possible that this line would continue into the South of Market area as a subway, likely under Howard Street or Folsom Boulevard. An additional light rail line would substantially increase the transit options available to workers and residents in the area. Any design changes for these streets must be cognizant of this potential project. Wherever this new light rail operates, there will be a significant increase in activity and the potential for additional streetcape enhancements.

In addition, Muni's proposed Third Street light rail line (street level) and future Third Street subway are just outside of the Project Area. There is an anticipated reduction of bus traffic on Third and Fourth Streets once light rail is in service. The Third Street service will be linked to the Terminal with consistent bus service and pedestrian-oriented streetscape along Mission Street.

Bicycle Framework Plan

Plans are currently in place to establish a westbound bicycle lane on Howard Street (to parallel the eastbound lane on Folsom Street). This lane will be implemented to Fremont Street shortly, and the plans to extend it further west are currently being evaluated. In addition, the ongoing update to the San Francisco Bicycle Plan has identified new bicycle lanes on Second Street as one of the 20 key projects to improve bicycle travel throughout the city (Exhibit S.13).

Within the study area, there will be a substantial increase in bicycle activity with the new residential developments in Transbay and Rincon Hill. As such, there will be a need for upgrades to the bicycle facilities, primarily in the north-south direction. With the changes to the configuration of the neighborhood streets, new bicycle routes will be established on Main Street (northbound) and Beale Street (southbound) and will connect to the existing routes in the Financial District and along the Embarcadero. Along both streets, wider curb lanes will be created to allow safe riding for bicyclists. In addition, the residential characteristics of Main and Beale Streets, plus the Folsom Boulevard and the new alleyways, will enhance the bicyclist experience throughout the area.

PART TWO – NEIGHBORHOOD SUB-DISTRICTS

The Transbay Area is comprised of four neighborhood sub-districts, each containing their own distinct identity:

1 FOLSOM BOULEVARD

2 MAIN/BEALE PRECINCT

3 MIXED-USE HISTORIC DISTRICT

4 TERMINAL HUB

Part Two highlights the existing context of each sub-district and will propose special streetscape and open space improvements and urban design characteristics that further develop the vision of Transbay.

6 FOLSOM BOULEVARD

FOLSOM BOULEVARD

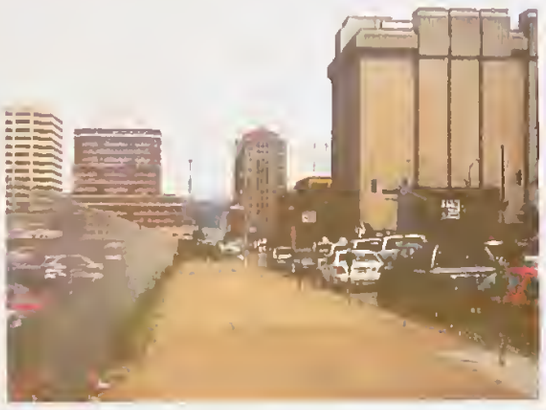
Folsom Street has the potential to be the future social and commercial heart of both the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods, forming a seam that joins the two. An amenity-rich boulevard lined with retail, public services and community space and housing above, Folsom will provide the neighborhoods with a much-needed core.

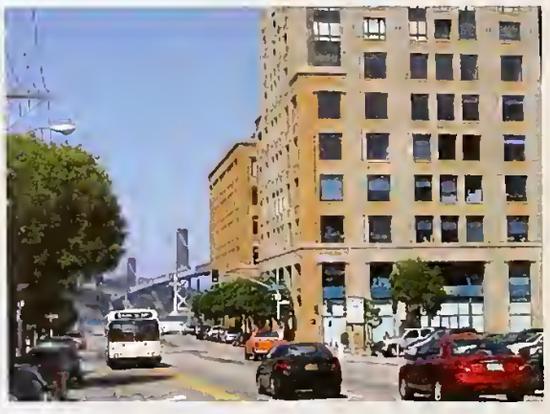
Folsom Boulevard

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Lined with neighborhood-serving retail, restaurants, and services, Folsom Boulevard will provide the two communities with the amenity corridor that every residential neighborhood needs. Not only does Folsom Street run between both neighborhoods, it also links the rest of the South of Market to the waterfront along the Embarcadero, terminating at the new Rincon Park. From the west, the Transbay and Rincon Hill districts are entered on Folsom Street, as it passes under the Bay Bridge off-ramp at Essex Street. What is currently a drab overpass is now in the process of being redesigned by Caltrans. This structure has the potential to become an elegant gateway to the district, framing the vista to the Bay and the Bay Bridge. When one considers the more than 3,000 new dwelling units planned for the publicly-owned parcels in Transbay added to the thousands being planned for Rincon Hill, the great potential to transform Folsom Street into a boulevard and make it come alive with activity becomes clear.

In order to fully transform the street into an inviting, active, amenity-rich boulevard and a notable signature promenade as envisioned, the pedestrian environment must be made dramatically more inviting, and the traffic functions of the roadway mitigated. Wider sidewalks with generous street trees and other streetscape amenities are critical to creating an environment for business and activity to spill out onto the sidewalk and for people to want to stroll and linger. And most importantly, traffic activity must be moderated to encourage a sense of pedestrian safety. This is often achieved by





Views of the Bay Bridge and the waterfront are framed as one travels along Folsom Street.

providing pedestrian-friendly zones that break up the travel lanes, and reduce the length of travel required to cross the street. Medians, corner bulb-outs, and raised pedestrian crosswalks can help mitigate traffic's negative effect on the pedestrian experience.

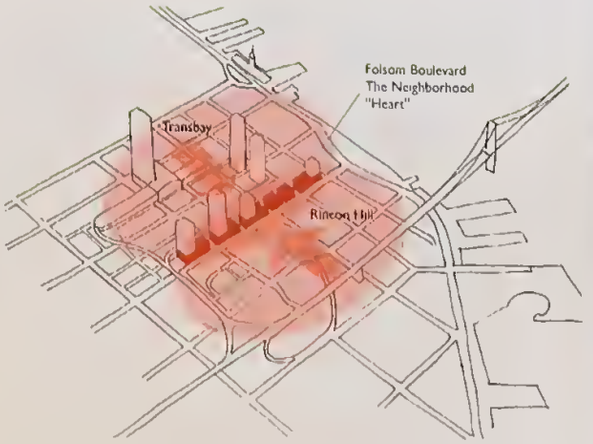
With the growth of the entire South of Market area as a residential and employment neighborhood over the last several years and the current dramatic growth planned, both the Planning Department and Muni have identified Folsom Street as a potential street for a new east-west transit corridor. This new service could take the form of the eastern terminus of the potential Geary light rail line, or a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line for the entire South of Market area. Improved transit service such as this will certainly add significant numbers of people to the activity of Folsom Street, adding to its role as the "main street" of the Transbay/Rincon downtown neighborhoods. This concept needs further study, and the street changes necessary to implement a successful new transit service on Folsom Street were not analyzed in the Transbay EIR/EIS; Thus, such a proposal is not included in this Design for Development. However, this potential is recognized for Folsom Street, so as not to preclude such plans in the future.

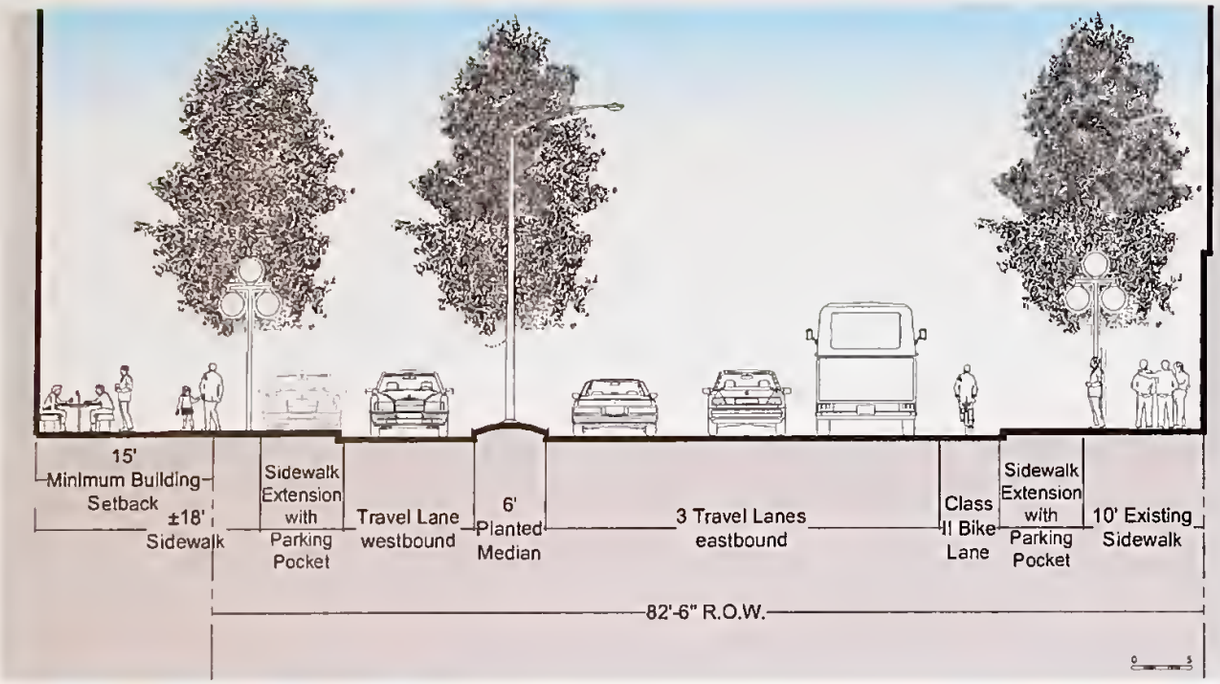
STREETS AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

Streetscape and open space improvements made to transform Folsom into a boulevard will support the high public character of this street and its uses. Based on the results of the traffic analysis conducted for the Transbay EIR/EIS, it will be possible to extend westbound Folsom Street for two additional blocks — from Main Street to Fremont Street. This change will greatly enhance local circulation and navigation and lessen the regional traffic character of the street. In addition, this street will maintain short-term curb parking on both sides to support retail businesses and to buffer pedestrians from traffic. An eastbound bicycle lane will also continue to be provided.

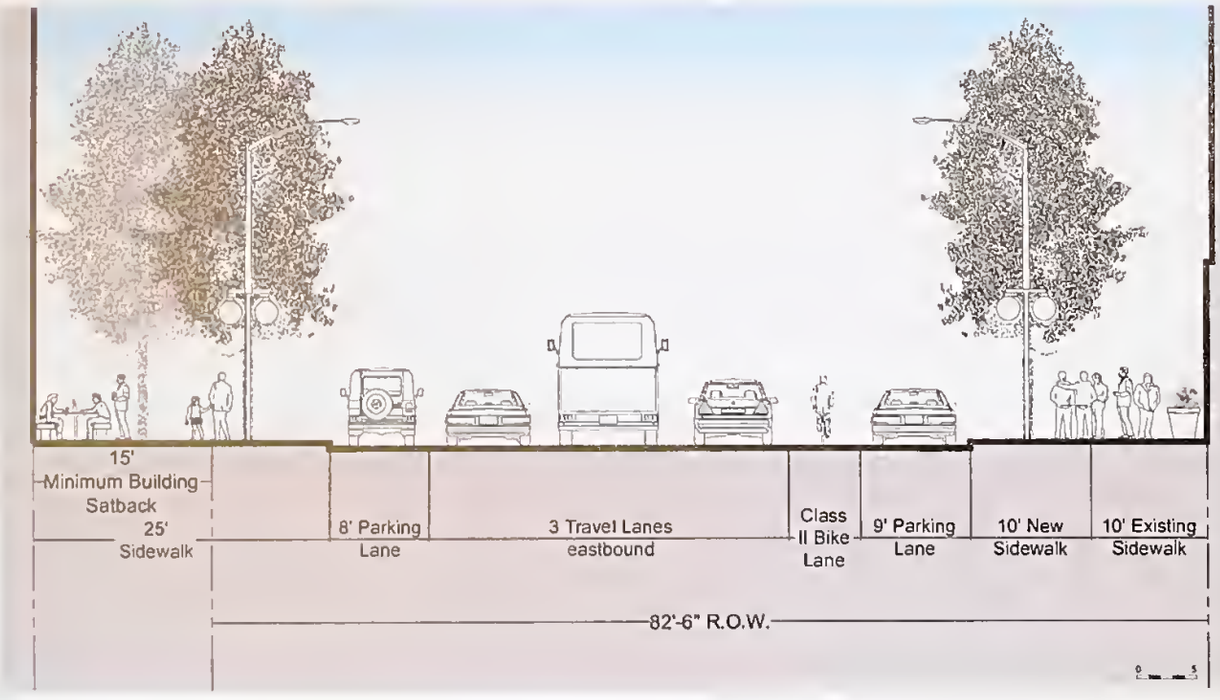
A 15-foot building setback will be maintained on the north side of the street along the entire length of the street in the Project Area. There is a preponderance of vacant, publicly-owned parcels along the north edge of Folsom Street, providing an important opportunity to significantly expand the sidewalk.

Two alternative configurations of Folsom are presented and illustrated in this plan. A number of unresolved issues of both local and wider impact, such as the potential for BRT on Folsom and other technical and cost issues, need to be studied before a streetscape and street configuration scheme for Folsom Boulevard is settled.





ALTERNATIVE ONE:
FOLSOM BOULEVARD WITH MEDIAN



ALTERNATIVE TWO:
FOLSOM BOULEVARD WITHOUT MEDIAN

Folsom Median Configuration

In the first alternative, a tree-lined median is added between the eastbound and westbound lanes, making for a more sheltered and human-scale environment north of the median and giving a grander look to the Boulevard. The street and parking area between the median and sidewalk curb would be treated with textured or other detailed surfaces as part of the pedestrian realm to calm traffic. This creates a 17- to 20-foot sidewalk on the north side, most of it accommodated by the 15-foot building setback. A wider sidewalk is dependent upon slightly narrower travel lane widths. In either case, the ample width on this sunny side of the street creates space for extensive landscaping, furnishings, and businesses and cafes to spill out. The median treatment would create a distinctive character and identity for Folsom Boulevard among Transbay streets. As with any streetscape enhancements, it should be noted that there are technical issues with the maintenance of any planted median that would need to be addressed in a future study.

This boulevard median configuration could, at a later date, be converted to a symmetric "whole" boulevard compatible with the BRT concept, by adding a second median mirroring the first, using road width currently used by the eastbound bike lane (which could move to Howard Street, should that be converted to two-way as well). This long-term concept requires a broader analysis of more widespread SoMa street changes for the downtown neighborhoods not contained in the Transbay EIS/EIR or not possible at a localized Transbay level. As a result, it is not proposed in this plan, though the potential is recognized.

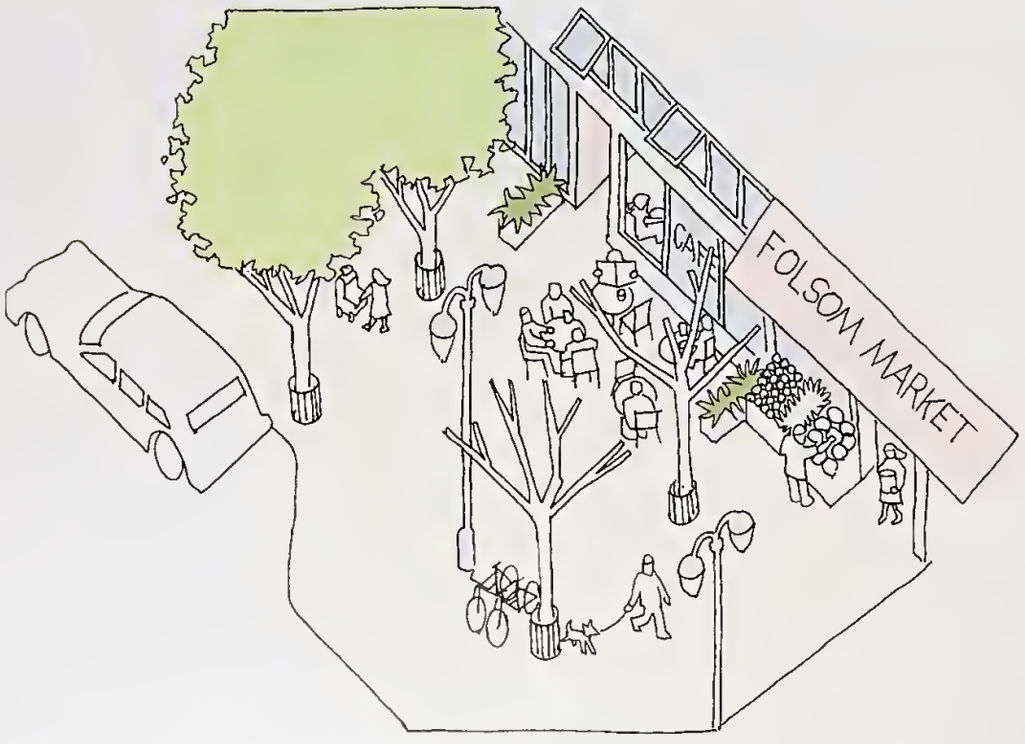
Equal Sidewalks Widening Configuration

In the second alternative, the sidewalks are widened on both sides of the Boulevard. The 15-foot north side setback enables the creation of a generous 22-foot sidewalk on this sunny side of the street for pedestrian and commercial activity. The southern sidewalk, while not within the Project Area, could also be widened to approximately 16 feet and can be furnished with lighting, street trees, seating, and other amenities.

URBAN FORM

Block Layout

Each block, with the exception of that bounded by Beale and Main Streets, will be wrapped with low-rise (four to eight floors) buildings and contain one point tower (25–42 floors) located on a corner. Two blocks also feature mid-rise (14–16) buildings. Buildings along Folsom will be mixed-use with residential units above ground floor, flexible commercial spaces. The blocks are reduced in size and made more walkable by extending east-west Clementina Street, and by creating a new north-south public pedestrian passage linking Folsom Boulevard to Clementina and the new Transbay Square. Open space for the dwelling units on these blocks will take the form of interior-block courtyards, roof gardens, and terraces. The block between Ecker Alley and the Terminal off-ramp contains a building that encroaches into the proposed Boulevard's pedestrian promenade. The building and the vacant lot adjacent to the ramp could be redeveloped into higher density and set back to fulfill the urban design and development goals of the district.



Commercial activity will open onto the wide sidewalks along Folsom, making the Boulevard ideal for public gathering.

Neighborhood Retail and the Mews

After full buildout of the Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods, most of Folsom Boulevard between Essex Street and the Embarcadero is envisioned to feature active ground floor retail (similar to traditional neighborhood commercial districts in San Francisco). However, in the interim, to ensure a successful core retail district, the plan concentrates retail along Folsom Boulevard between Beale and Spear Streets and in the pedestrian mews. All the ground floor spaces along Folsom Boulevard will be designed so that they can support retail and commercial uses, so as the neighborhood develops and the new residential base increases market demand, retail can fill these spaces and extend west along Folsom. Until the area matures, these flexible ground floor spaces will be ideal for community and educational facilities, small offices, and public service providers.

The aforementioned Beale/Main block, directly south of Transbay Square, presents a special opportunity to connect these two neighborhood features and create a special retail mews with an intimate physical character. This retail mews builds on successful downtown models, like Maiden Lane, Belden Alley, and Commercial Street, all alleys in dense mixed-use districts that offer inviting, intimate pedestrian environments for dining and shopping along regularly or semi-permanently pedestrianized mid-block alleys.

Folsom Boulevard Requirements

- Maintain a solid street wall along the sidewalk.
- Maintain a minimum ceiling height of 15 feet on ground floors for flexible commercial space.
- Maintain 75 percent storefront transparency.
- Institute maximum floor areas and maximum street frontages for businesses to ensure multiple smaller businesses.

An active streetscape along Folsom Boulevard can be achieved with engaging signage, street furniture and transparent storefronts that open onto the sidewalk. The retail mews, modeled after San Francisco precedents, will also feature a pocket plaza with more generous space for other seating and cafes.

The new Folsom Boulevard will provide an active pedestrian experience with wide sidewalks, shops and restouronts.

7 MAIN / BEALE PRECINCT

MAIN/BEALE PRECINCT

The blocks bordered by Main and Beale Streets have the opportunity to become a livable, high-density residential neighborhood comprised of a network of open space improvements, sensitively designed townhouses, and mid- to high-rise residential towers. Wide, usable sidewalks, neighborhood parks and public plazas will improve the quality of space for residents, while connecting the area to the downtown, the waterfront and the adjacent residential neighborhoods of Rincon Hill and South Beach.

Main/Beale Precinct

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The Main/Beale precinct is located just south of the southern edge of the downtown office core and just north of the Rincon Hill residential area. It has exceptional access to the future Transbay Terminal and is in close walking distance to the Financial District, Market Street, BART, numerous Muni lines (subway, streetcar, and bus), and the Embarcadero, making it potentially one of the city's richest transit locations for housing.

The blocks bordered by Main, Beale, Natoma Streets and Folsom Boulevard will become the Transbay Area's residential core. Across Folsom Boulevard, planning for Rincon Hill proposes to extend this residential district southward.

This precinct will develop its own neighborhood identity, characterized by townhouses with individual entries and front stoops at 20–25 foot increments along low-rise, mid-block buildings and incorporated into larger, high-rise development blocks, all lining significantly expanded sidewalk spaces. There is little existing accessible open space within the immediate area; thus, the new neighborhood will be centered on the new Transbay Square, the public park comprised of passive and casual active recreation space. This park will be accentuated with dramatic streetscape improvements featuring usable open space amenities along Main and Beale, and a pedestrian retail mews extending from the park to Folsom Boulevard.

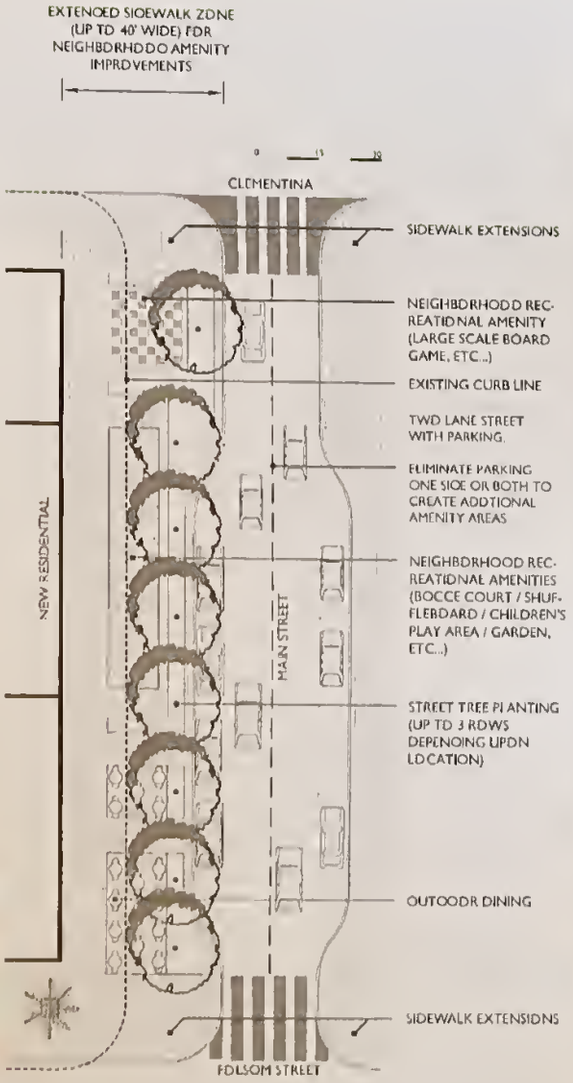
The Main/Beale Precinct is bordered by mid- to high-rise office buildings. The plan to create wide, usable sidewalks will buffer the residential district and provide direct links to the Embarcadero, Rincon Hill and South Beach to the south and downtown to the north.

This high-density residential district will be a hallmark of sustainability for urban development. All new residential buildings, from townhouses to towers, will make extensive use of "green" building technology, including natural lighting, energy and water efficient building systems, life-cycle building materials, green podium rooftops, and solar installations where feasible. The parks and streetscapes will incorporate permeable surfaces to filter rainwater, regionally appropriate tree selection, and other sustainable landscape materials.

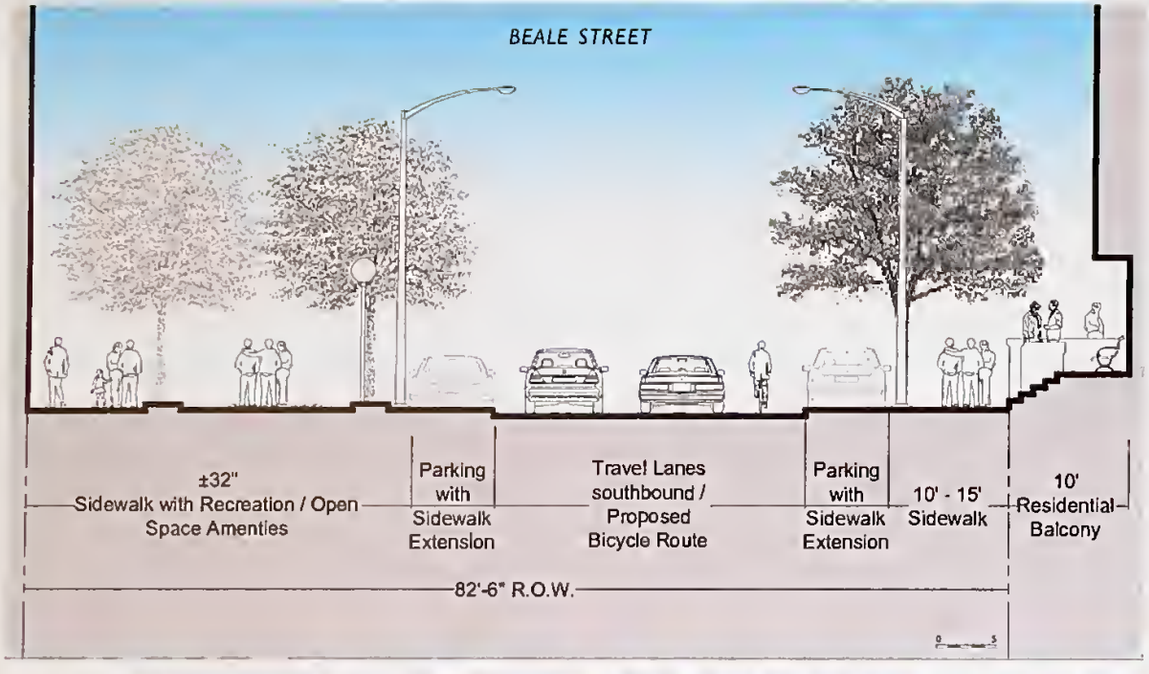
The district circulation and walkability will be enhanced by three new right-of-way extensions. At the north end, Natoma Street will extend across Beale to become a pedestrian pathway at the transition point between office and residential development. South of Howard Street, two new narrow alleys will border the new park: one along the current alignment of Clementina, the other will be aligned with the existing pedestrian access way that connects Main Street to Spear Street. These alleyways will provide vehicular access to buildings with special pavement treatment and landscaping to create a safe, pedestrian-oriented realm between the townhouses and the park. Howard Street will also receive streetscape improvements and will become lined with walk-up residential units integrated into larger buildings.

STREETS AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

Due to the low traffic volumes on Main and Beale Streets, this neighborhood will feature a public space resource that will be unique in San Francisco. Sidewalks on one side of each of these streets will be widened to 32 feet, creating sidewalks that actually function as open space in addition to pedestrian movement corridors. These wide sidewalks will create a new prototype for open space in San Francisco. Reserving eight to ten feet of width for pedestrian movement, the remaining 22 to 24 feet of width is gracious enough to accommodate usable open space amenities, creating a linear park along these streets and increasing the water-permeable open space. Such amenities and small-scale, active recreational uses could include tot lots, small gardens, bocci ball courts, life-size chess boards, and a myriad of other possibilities. In areas where these extra-wide sidewalks abut commercial uses, the open space portion could feature café seating, temporary merchant displays, or news kiosks. Much narrower than 32 feet, the sidewalk would not be able to comfortably fit such amenities alongside walking space.

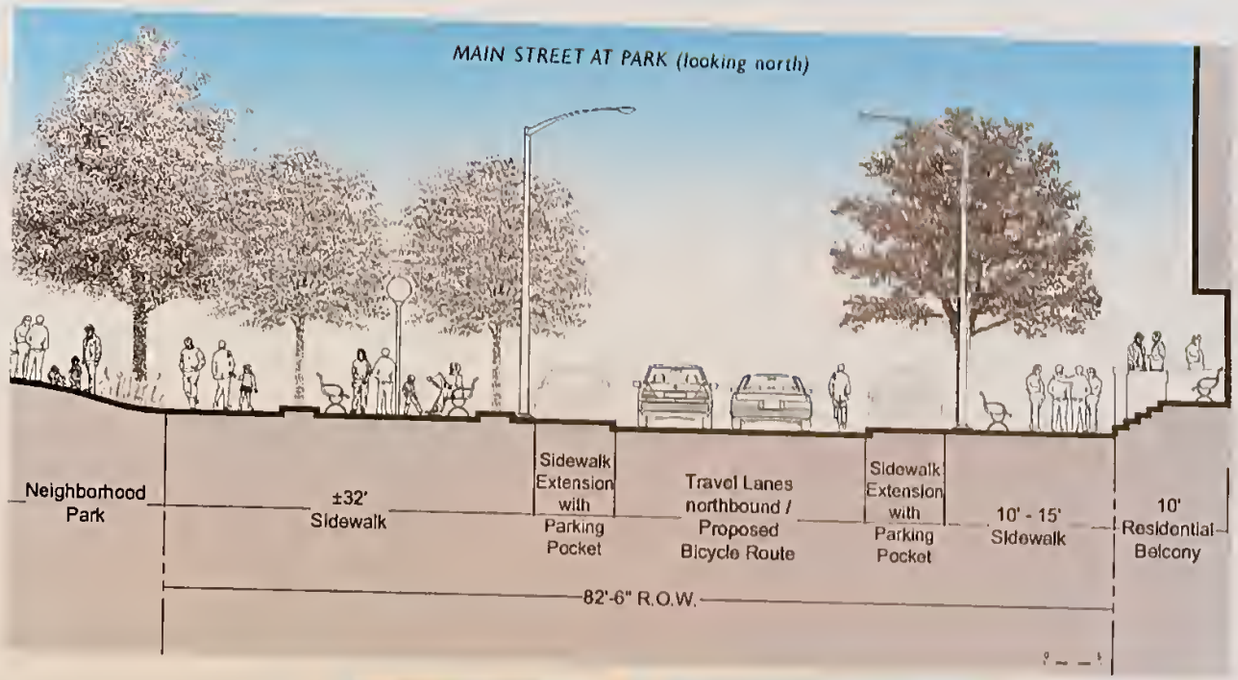


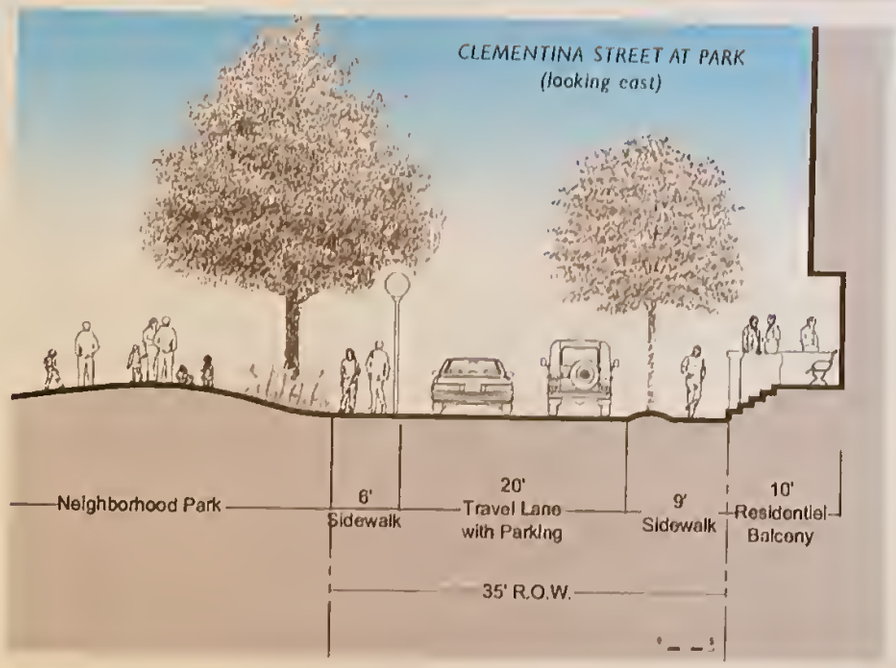
PLAN DETAIL OF MAIN/BEALE STREET



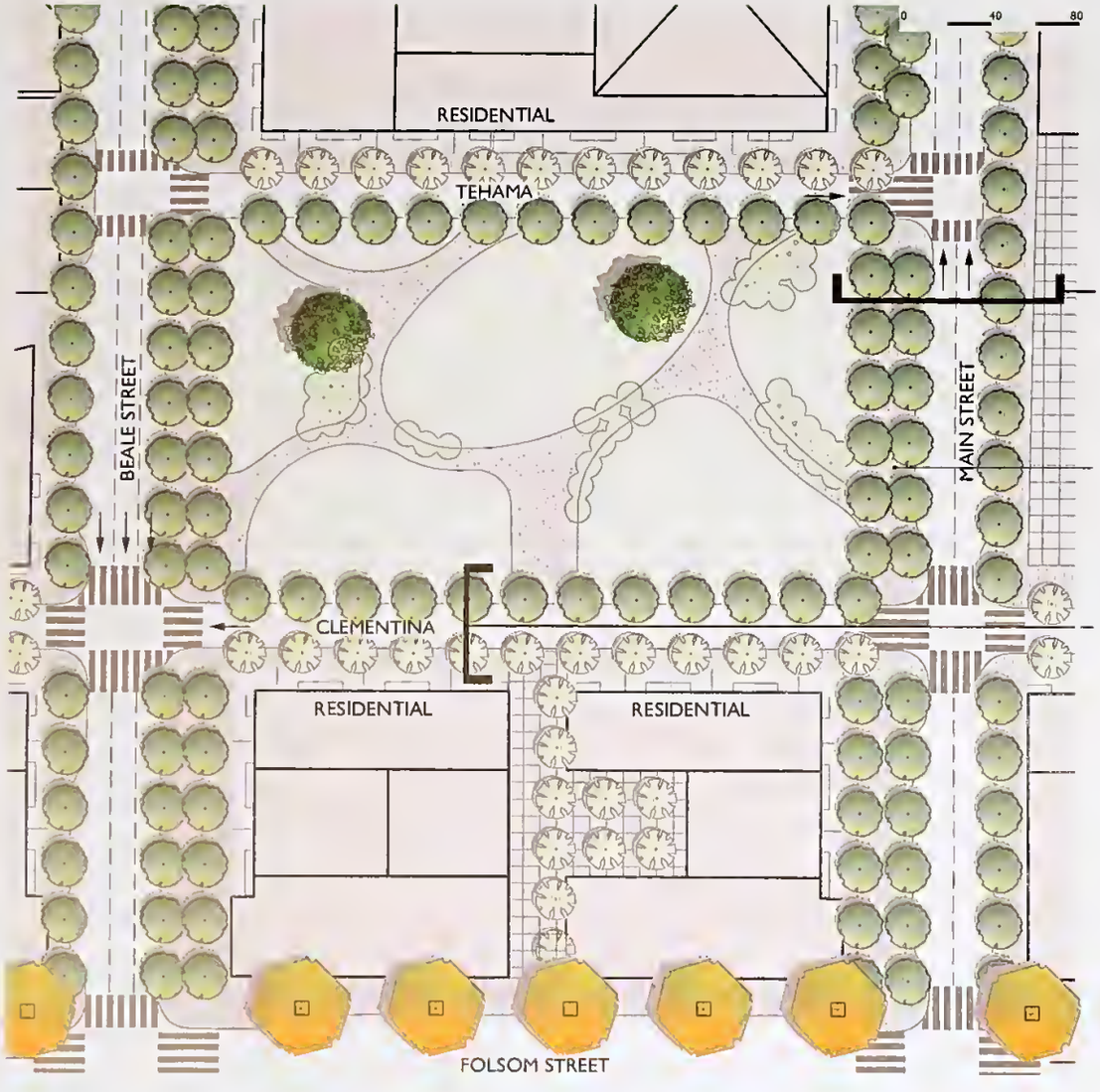
The linear park streetscapes along Main and Beale Streets bracket the new major community park at the center of this district. The new Transbay Square would be comparable in size to Sydney Walton Park in the Golden Gateway area. The park, intended to be a soft, landscaped space, would be framed on the north and south by residential townhouses opening directly onto the park frontage alleys. These park frontage alleys (as illustrated by the cross-section of the Clementina Street extension) will be narrow and designed as slow, pedestrian-oriented spaces. The rows of townhouses framing the park lanes, in addition to being very desirable park-fronting units, will give the park a neighborhood ambiance.

To provide for the wider sidewalks, one travel lane will be eliminated along portions of Beale Street (southbound), Main Street (northbound) and Spear Street (southbound). Parallel curb parking would be retained on both sides of these streets, with two travel lanes total. New bicycle routes will be established on Beale Street and Main Street, which will connect to the existing routes along the Embarcadero and within the Financial District. Traffic volumes and speeds will be low enough to allow those streets to be excellent bicycle routes without the need for striped bicycle lanes. New east-west alleyways will be established between Howard Street and Folsom Boulevard, which will enhance local vehicular circulation and pedestrian connections.


MAIN STREET AT PARK (looking north)
Neighborhood Park
±32' Sidewalk
Sidewalk Extension with Parking Pocket
Travel Lanes northbound / Proposed Bicycle Route
Sidewalk Extension with Parking Pocket
10' - 15' Sidewalk
10' Residential Balcony
82'-6" R.O.W.


CLEMENTINA STREET AT PARK
(looking east)
Neighborhood Park
6' Sidewalk
20' Travel Lane with Parking
9' Sidewalk
10' Residential Balcony
35' R.O.W.

PLAN DETAIL OF TRANSBAY SQUARE AND ADJACENT STREETS



ILLUSTRATIVE CROSS SECTION:
MAIN STREET AT PARK
SEE PAGE 7.5

WIDE SIDEWALK AND
AMENITIES BOTH SIDES OF
PARK

ILLUSTRATIVE CROSS SECTION:
CLEMENTINA STREET AT PARK
SEE PAGE 7.5

URBAN FORM

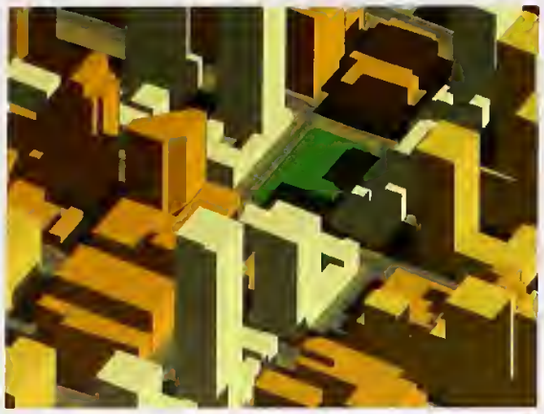
Like the blocks along Folsom Boulevard, each block will be comprised of a mixture of mid-block, low-rise buildings punctuated by mid-rise and high-rise buildings on the corners, all meeting the ground in the form of townhouse units. Landscaping and front stoops at the ground level will reinforce the human scale of the development, will soften the building edges, and will allow personalization and individuality to be expressed for each townhouse, making for an engaging, pedestrian environment. Along Main, Beale, Tehama and Clementina Streets, the semi-private open spaces created by the stoops will face the linear parks or Transbay Square, creating a truly residential neighborhood with ample green space.

The height and width of the front stoop transition space for the ground floor units are very important in providing units with enough privacy and usability of the space, while creating an engaging interface with the sidewalk. Setbacks of different depths are appropriate in different street types and for different front entry arrangements. For example, a shallower, six foot setback along the less active alleys and streets like Tehama and Clementina is sufficient, whereas 10 feet is required along more active streets such as Main, Beale, and Howard Streets. A deeper (8–10 foot) setback enables the creation of a usable raised front porch in addition to a landscaped street edge, while a shallower (5–6 foot) setback is fine for conditions where only landscaping is desired. In all cases, the ground floor units must be raised at least three feet above the sidewalk level to keep windows above pedestrian eye level for privacy, but not much more than three feet to maintain a visual connection to and the private surveillance of the street.

The base level treatment of these townhouses break up the street wall, provide residents semi-private open space and enliven the sidewalk. *Source of photographs: Vancouver Planning Department*

The heights around Transbay Square, especially the 45-foot townhouse area to the immediate south, have been carefully tuned to allow maximum sunlight access to the open space. The corners on Beale Street along the west side of the square should be designed to accommodate retail tenants, such as restaurants and cafes, that will further the connection between the open space and community gathering spaces. The two tall residential towers between Tehama and Natoma Streets are proposed to be built fronting Main Street. While tower placement in this plan is prescriptive, in this case, an alternative tower siting fronting Beale Street, on the block between Howard and Natoma Streets, to offset the towers may be acceptable. The tower placement must meet the Design for Development performance standards, such as the maintenance of sunlight to public open space and permeable views from the Bay Bridge to downtown.

9 am



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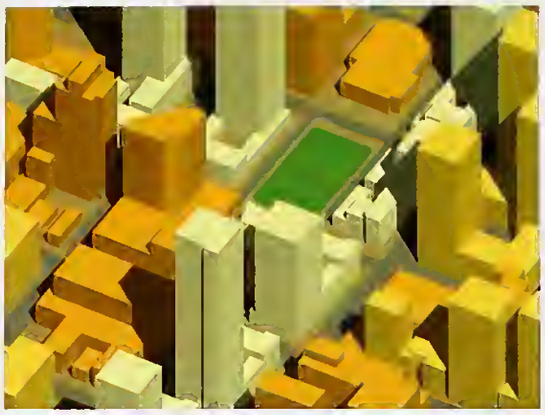

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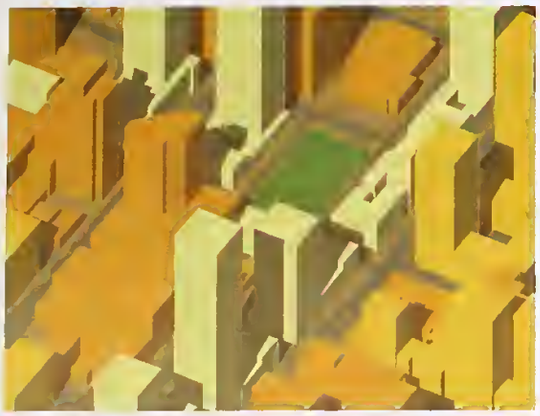

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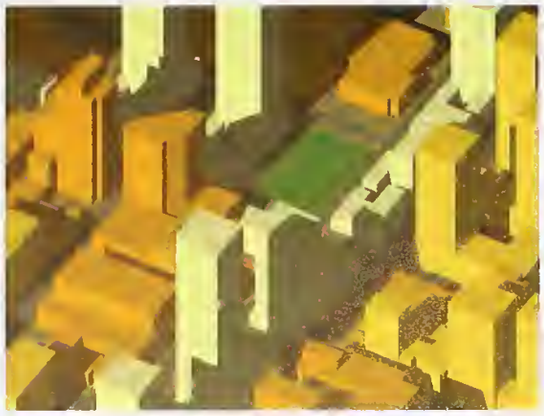

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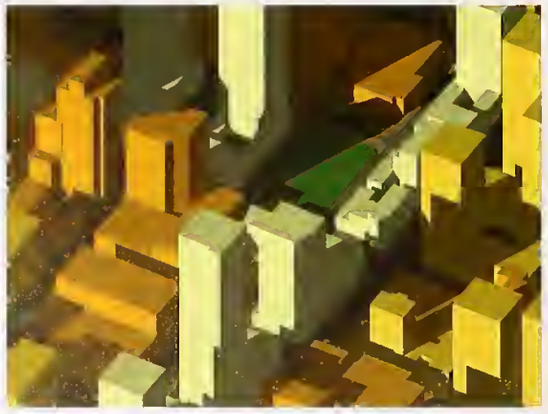
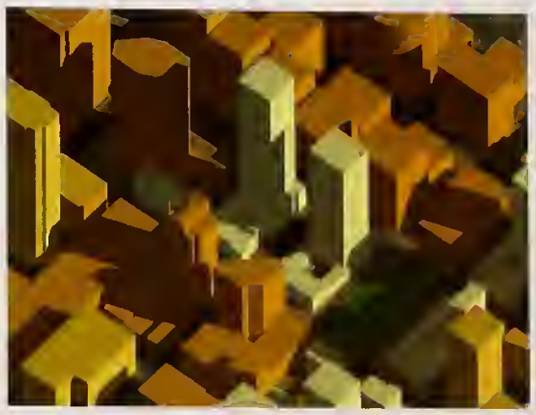


4 pm

The three dimensional block studies above show how Transbay Square and the blocks to the north and south are little affected by shadow throughout the day during the spring Equinox (March 21st). Tower placement in the plan has been very deliberate to achieve this.

The five residential blocks along Folsom Boulevard and the two blocks between Main and Beale Streets are composed of mid-rise development along the perimeter of each block in addition to the high-rise towers. The courtyards in the center of each block and the surrounding building facades will receive sunlight during the mid-day hours between the spring and fall Equinox. Special attention was given to units with a single orientation inside double-loaded corridor buildings. The majority of these buildings will receive sunlight either during mid-morning or mid-afternoon between the spring and fall Equinox.



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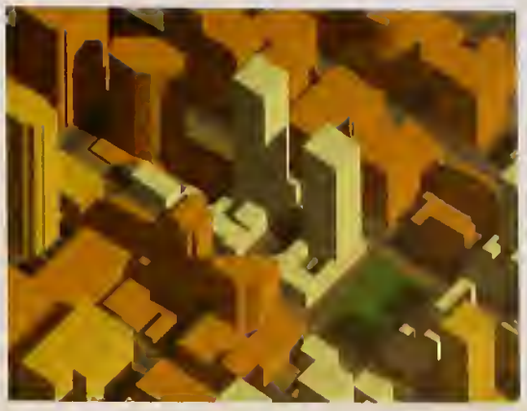

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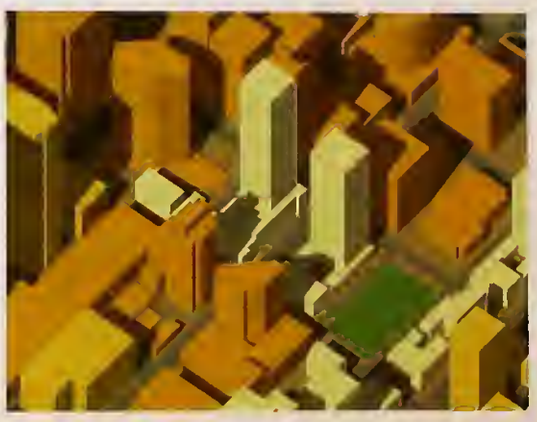

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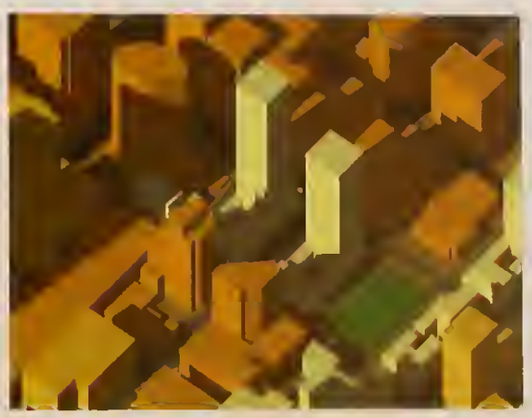

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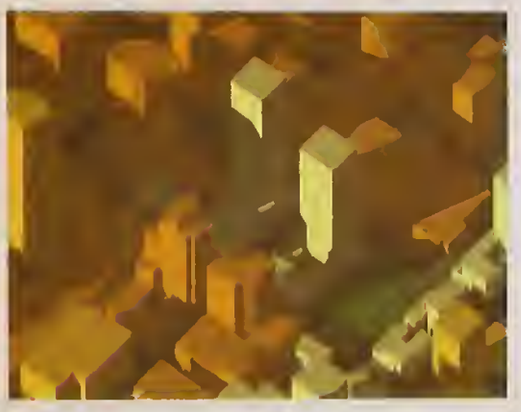


4 pm

Looking east towards the park, the new extension of Clementina Street is lined with residential townhouses.

8 MIXED-USE HISTORIC DISTRICT

MIXED-USE HISTORIC DISTRICT

An integral element of the Redevelopment Plan for Transbay is recognizing the value of the current historic pattern surrounding Second Street and adjacent alleys, and responding to it with planning decisions that sustain its character.

Mixed-use Historic District

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The western portion of the Project Area is unique in that it contains a cluster of low- and mid-rise, early 20th-Century commercial and industrial buildings and a diverse set of land uses. This area is referred to as the Mixed-Use Historic District and is located south and west of the new Terminal. The Mixed-Use Historic District is overlapped by two officially-designated historic districts — the New Montgomery-Second Street Conservation District and the Second and Howard Streets Historic District (refer to the Historic Resources in Downtown Neighborhoods Diagram on page 3.6).

The Second Street corridor, from Market Street to San Francisco's waterfront ballpark, possesses great potential as a historic, pedestrian-retail district, as it is lined with mostly mid-rise early 20th-Century commercial and industrial buildings with pedestrian-level openings and facade transparency. Within the Transbay area, Second Street is chiefly commercial and contains several unreinforced masonry buildings. Behind Second Street, to the east, are several narrow, smaller side streets, such as Minna, Natoma, and Clementina, that contain several low-rise, industrial and heavy-commercial buildings, interspersed amongst surface parking lots and a handful of residential structures. Howard and Mission Streets in this district lend to the historic air of Second Street and are lined with older commercial and industrial buildings of a higher height. Some buildings are in use, while others are vacant. A particular challenge as well as an opportunity in this district is the existing Terminal bus ramp structure that weaves through the central portion of most of the blocks from north to south. The reconstruction of this ramp will be designed in a manner that provides active open space and safe pedestrian linkages underneath, mid-block, from north to south.

Low-rise brick buildings representing early 20th-Century architecture line Second Street. The scale and character of these buildings should be upheld with new infill development

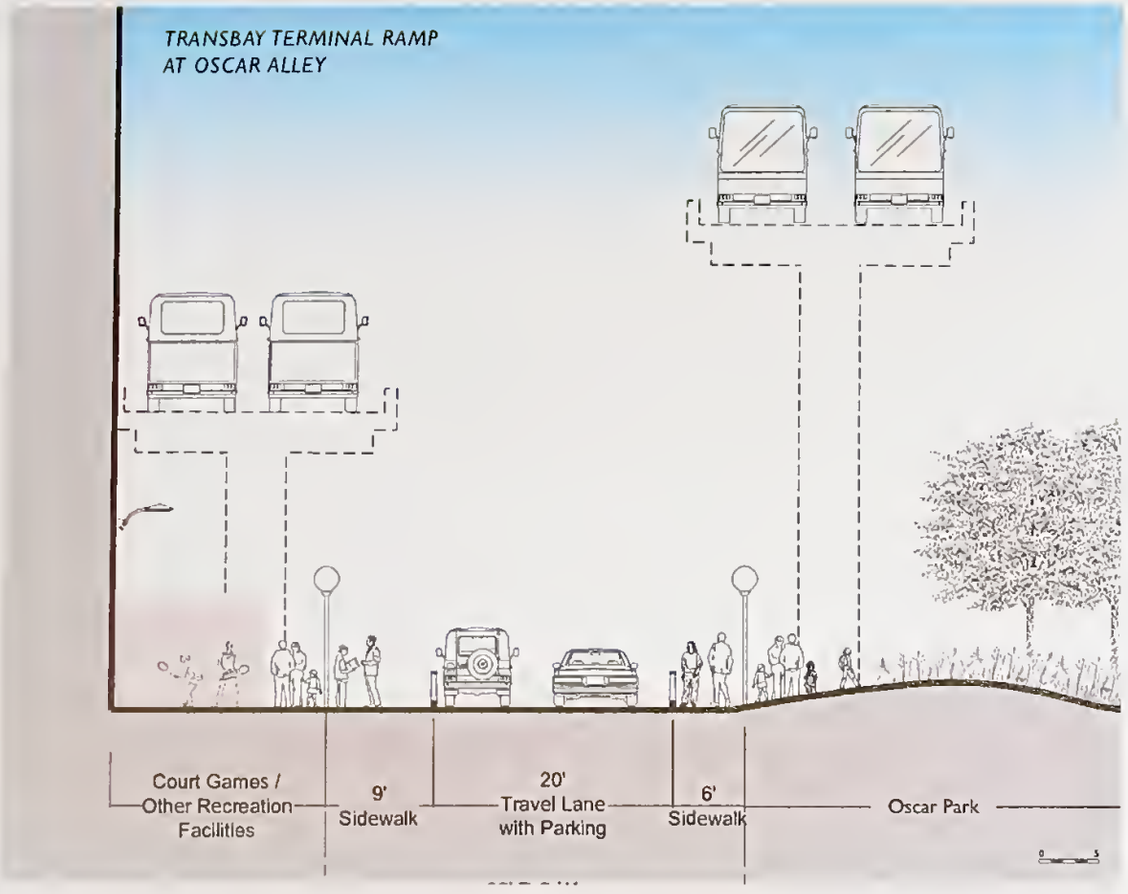
Mixed-Use Historic District Requirements

- Continue the pedestrian lane network.
- Provide programmed open space (especially under the ramps).
- Require infill development comparable in scale and grain to existing architecture to maintain the character of the district.
- Rehabilitate, seismically retrofit, and improve the environmental performance of historic buildings.
- Encourage "eyes on the street" by renovating existing buildings to face open space and alleys.
- Require all development to incorporate pedestrian paths into building design.

STREETS AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

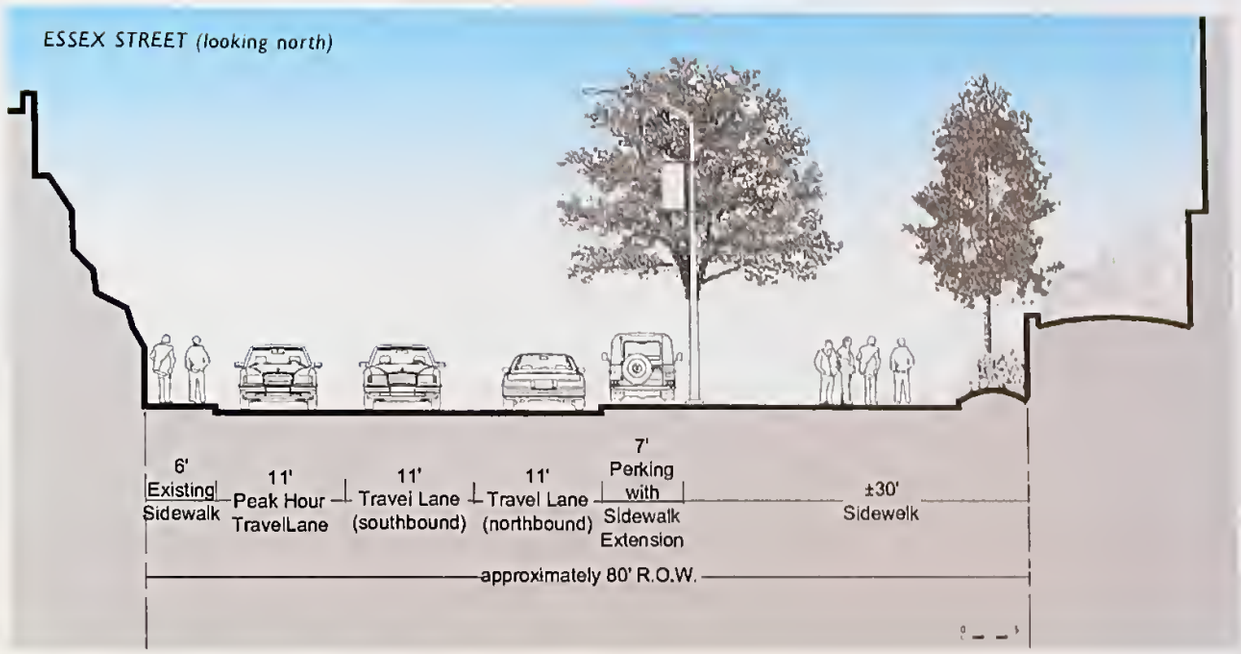
With its mix of residential, office and retail uses, this district has the potential to be a unique neighborhood with similarities to South Park and the Hayes Valley neighborhoods.

This district will have a major open space component consisting of Oscar Park and adjoining recreation facilities. The elevated Terminal approach ramps create a unique situation that lends itself to these uses. The plan details (right and on page 8.7) illlustrate the approach to configuring these recreation amenities.



Oscar Park will be located in the widest portion of available property, primarily between Clementina and Tehama Streets, but also extending somewhat north and south along the new Oscar Alley. While the areas directly under the access ramps will be largely in shadow, the larger park area will enjoy considerable sun exposure. Extensions of the park east to First Street, north to Howard Street, and south to Folsom Boulevard will provide enhanced pedestrian corridors that will facilitate pedestrian movements to and from the Terminal and Rincon Hill.

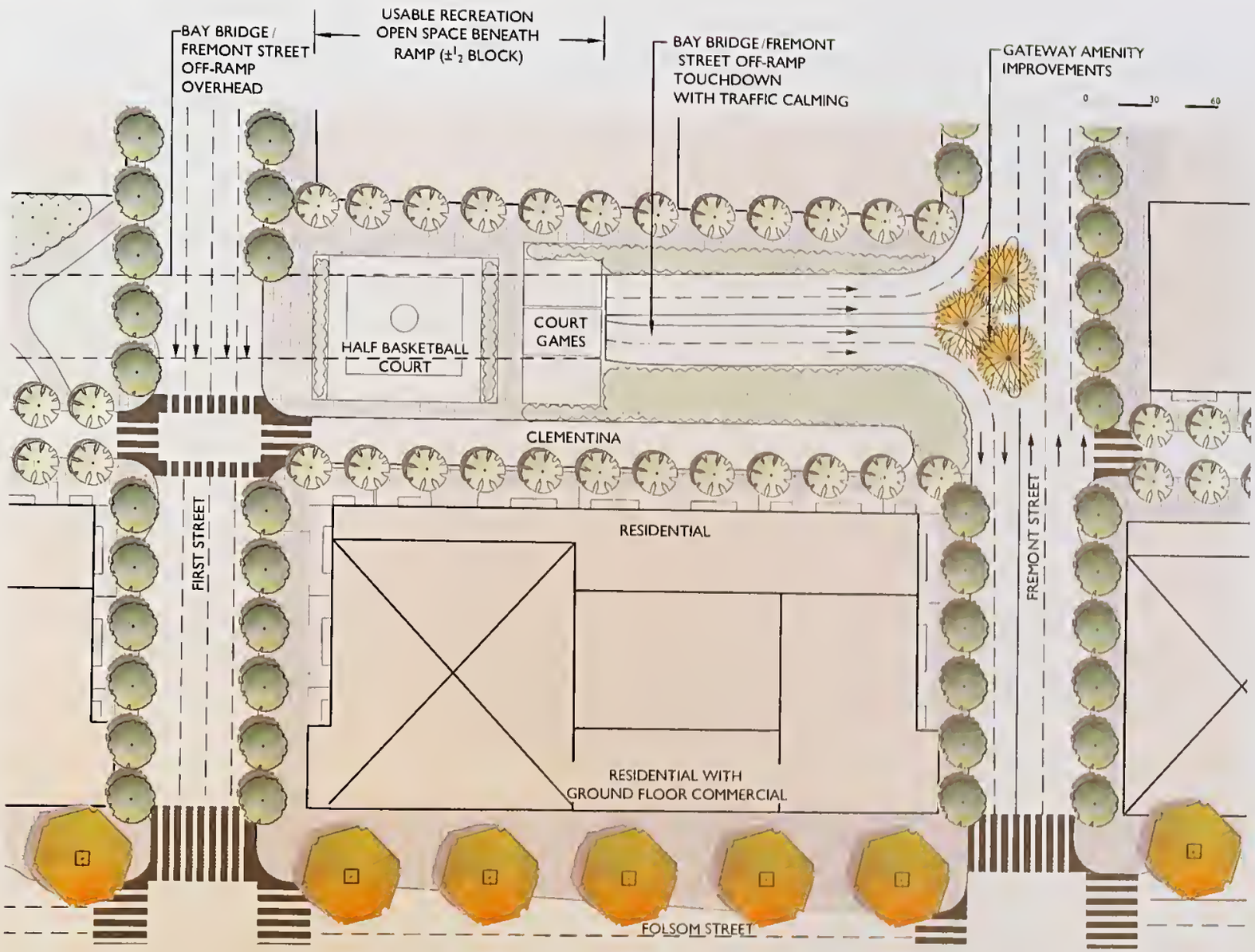
The cross-section at Oscar Alley shows the recreation uses, the narrow vehicular right-of-way, and improved sidewalks as they would fit under the elevated ramps. The ramp configuration, yet to be designed, will need to minimize the impact of support columns and roadway width, so as to create as sunny a zone at ground level as possible. Active recreation uses are ideal under these ramps, so they do not continue to be unused, unsafe zones, dividing the district.



Essex Street as it exists today, looking north (left) and south (right).

Essex Street is the western boundary of Rincon Hill, cut into the hill and lying at the base of a steep slope. This street is quite wide, and southbound lanes feed the Bay Bridge. The cross-section of Essex Street shows the revised configuration of what is now a vehicle-dominated street. Lying to the west of a residential block, this street will be improved by widening the east sidewalk. This is made possible by converting one of the two southbound travel lanes to a tow-away/peak hour travel lane.

Additional active recreation facilities will be located to the east, across First Street along the Clementina alignment. Here the elevated ramps begin their descent, touching down at Fremont Street. On the eastern portion of the block, adequate height will allow a half-basketball court and smaller courts for such uses as handball. In addition, a skate park, dog run or other recreational sports can utilize the otherwise leftover space under and adjacent to the ramps. As the ramps descend, headroom is lost, but pedestrian connections continue to the east, out to Fremont Street.


BAY BRIDGE / FREMONT STREET OFF-RAMP OVERHEAD
USABLE RECREATION OPEN SPACE BENEATH RAMP (±1/2 BLOCK)
BAY BRIDGE/FREMONT STREET OFF-RAMP TOUCHDOWN WITH TRAFFIC CALMING
GATEWAY AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS
0
30
60
HALF BASKETBALL COURT
COURT GAMES
CLEMENTINA
FIRST STREET
FREMONT STREET
RESIDENTIAL
RESIDENTIAL WITH GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL
FOLSOM STREET

Small, public lanes like this one (shown gated) will be opened to the public and will be extended to link new and existing businesses with more "eyes on the street."

An example from the renovated, mixed-use historic district of Yaletown in Vancouver B.C. is shown above. New infill development (shown in the foreground) opens onto pedestrian-oriented streets, adding to the quality and character of the district.

New off-ramps will still pass over the district, but the space below them will be programmed as open space with direct access from the adjacent buildings.

Existing small-scale buildings are met in scale and proportion by the new office building on the left, as it steps down to a comparable height.

URBAN FORM

The character of the Mixed-use Historic District is distinctly different from the rest of the Transbay area. Rather than the wide, long blocks that characterize the majority of Transbay, the blocks in the Mixed-Use Historic District are broken up with pedestrian-scale streets, such as Minna and Natoma. Fine grain, mixed-use residential, industrial, and office space comprise the District in a pattern of small parcels. In order to respond appropriately to the District's existing nature, all new development will be of a comparable scale. In addition, new development will respond to the narrow, low-rise buildings and to the architectural details that characterize the existing buildings.

Rather than developing one large building with various, individual historic-like façades (as is commonly done to achieve the historic "look"), instead the Design for Development Team recommends adhering to the original historic parcelization. As a result, the character and diversity of the District will be maintained, and the possibility for small business development will be more feasible.

When existing buildings in the District are renovated for seismic or aesthetic purposes, the buildings should be designed to open onto the new public open spaces and pedestrian lanes. Thereby, they can take advantage of public improvements and can activate the space adjacent to and under the off-ramps. These spaces are currently considered no-man's land and undesirable for active community use. New open spaces with programmed active uses will take the place of derelict hardscapes below the ramps. In addition to programmed open space, the community has suggested some possible development uses under these ramps, including art studios and a community center.

Similarly, infill development should be designed with building facades that complement the adjacent open spaces and alleys and create active streetscapes. Based on the historic alleyway network, the new alleys will provide pedestrian, and in some cases, vehicular access to reinforce the walkability and human scale of the city.

UNDESIRABLE

This image shows what not to do in or near the Mixed-use Historic District. The building, on the right, does not relate to its neighbor in scale, façade treatment, or massing.

DESIRABLE

This new office development located at the corner of Clementina and Second Streets (shown above) is appropriate in material and character to the historic context of Second Street.

9 TERMINAL HUB

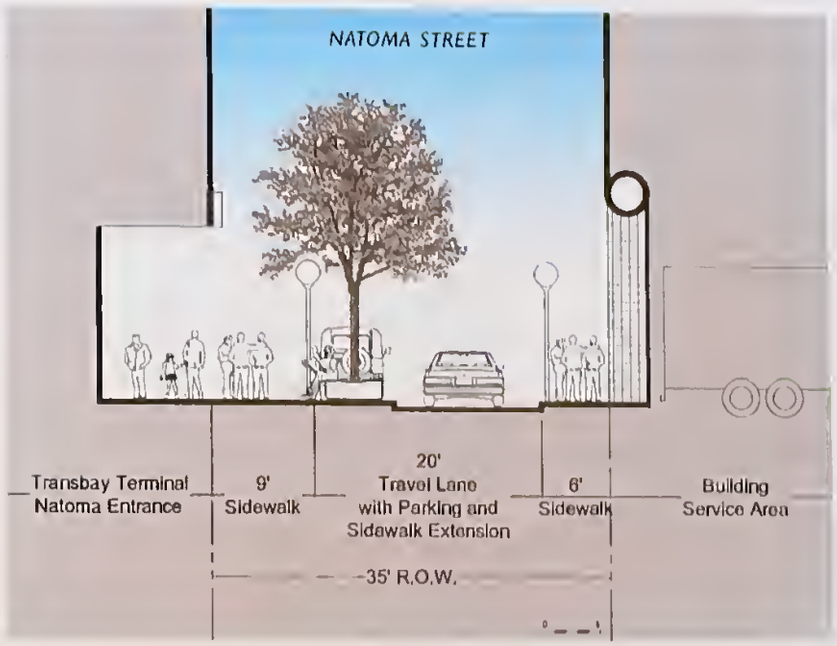
STREETS AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

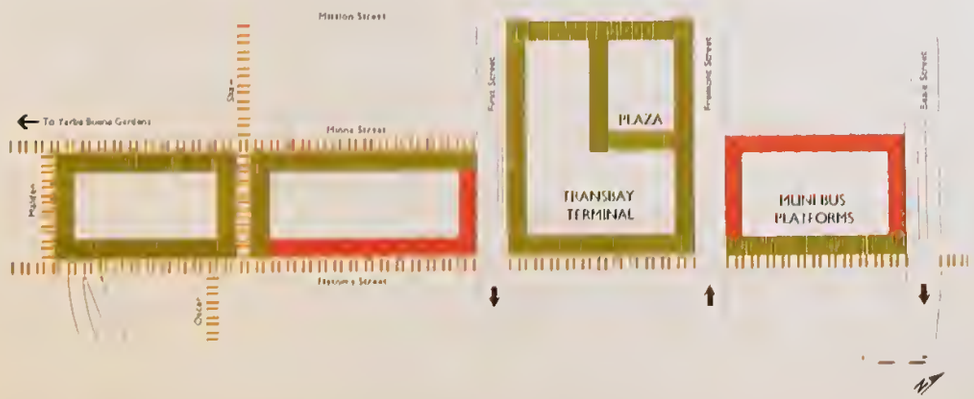
Given the high volumes of pedestrians entering and exiting the Terminal, the quality of the pedestrian environment surrounding it is particularly important. While the new Terminal has yet to be designed, certain principles will guide its configuration and will ensure that the pedestrian environment is not compromised by the high volumes of bus, taxi, and drop-off traffic.

The design of the Plaza and the ground level around the Terminal should help pedestrians access their mode of transit from all orientations.

The cross-section through Natoma Street at the Terminal illustrates a likely condition on the south edge of the facility. Here, although service access exists on the edge of the facing building to the south, a generous pedestrian zone should be provided on the north side of the alley, to allow pedestrians to easily and to safely enter the Terminal building.

The diagram to the right establishes the public environment context around the Terminal. The yellow pattern delineates the pedestrian alleys that will frame the Terminal. As shown, in some areas (indicated in green), the Terminal frontage should be pedestrian-friendly, with an inviting edge, permeable to pedestrian movement. This is essential on the west, where multiple pedestrian connections pass through the Terminal, and the southern side of the middle and the eastern portions of the Terminal, which will be primary access routes for pedestrians approaching from the Transbay area or Rincon Hill. Around the central core of the Terminal, where the primary vertical circulation will occur, it will be particularly important that the Terminal itself be supportive of pedestrian activity and that the streetscape and pedestrian environment be of a high quality.





TERMINAL HUB

The addition of the state of the art, multi-modal Transbay Terminal will not only provide easily-accessible transit options to San Francisco's residents, visitors, and workers, but it will also offer the city a grand, civic landmark. The proximity of the Terminal to the high-density residential Transbay and Rincon Hill neighborhoods will create a pedestrian-oriented, sustainable district immediately adjacent to downtown San Francisco.

Terminal Hub

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

The Terminal is not only the confluence of the region's major transit services, but it sits at the future center of the city's downtown, the hinge between the Financial District and the new downtown neighborhoods. While the current Transbay Terminal serves 20,000 passengers daily (mostly East Bay commuters), the new proposed multi-modal Terminal at the site has the potential to increase this figure dramatically. A total of 80,000 passengers from all around the region are expected to use the Terminal on opening day with a capacity to handle close to 300,000 daily passengers at the facility. With the extension of Caltrain into the Terminal and with improved facilities for AC Transit and other regional bus services, the facility will be a hub of transportation for passengers from the East Bay, the South Bay, and the Peninsula. In addition, San Francisco residents with both out-of-city and local destinations accessible by Muni, will depart from the facility. The Terminal may also someday be the main arrival point for people traveling on high-speed rail from southern California.

Today's Terminal is deteriorated and functionally obsolete, and provides passengers a dreary experience. Tomorrow's Terminal will celebrate transit, commerce, and downtown San Francisco. The main entry experience will be transformed with a grand entry Plaza, in the form of a pavilion, located next to a proposed mixed-use Transit Tower. Together, the Terminal, the Plaza and the Tower will become a new city landmark, which will mark the central apex of the downtown skyline and will take advantage of the access to transit.

The Transbay Terminal is nestled among high-rises to the north and to the west, and mid-rises to the south.

At ground level, the Terminal's public realm is currently dominated by vehicular traffic.

STREETS AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

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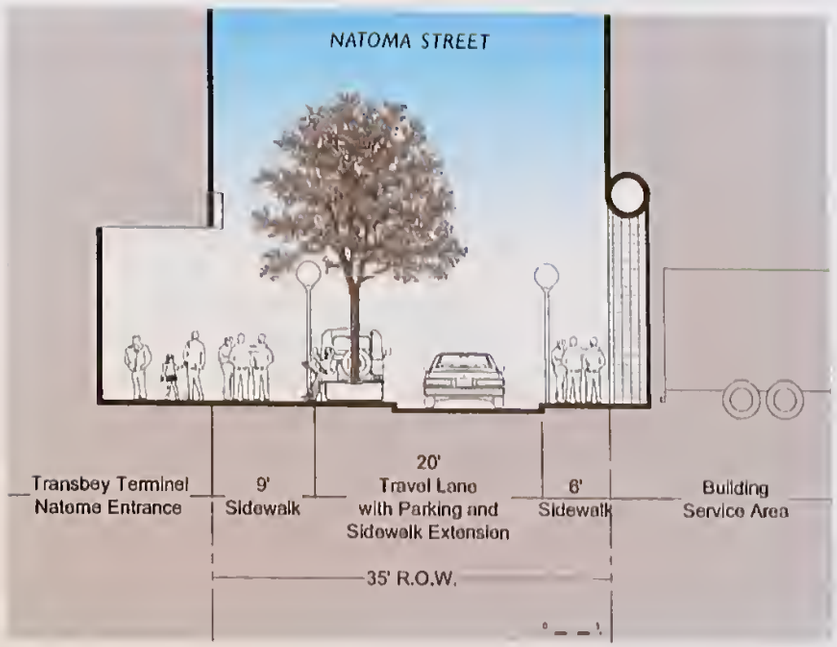
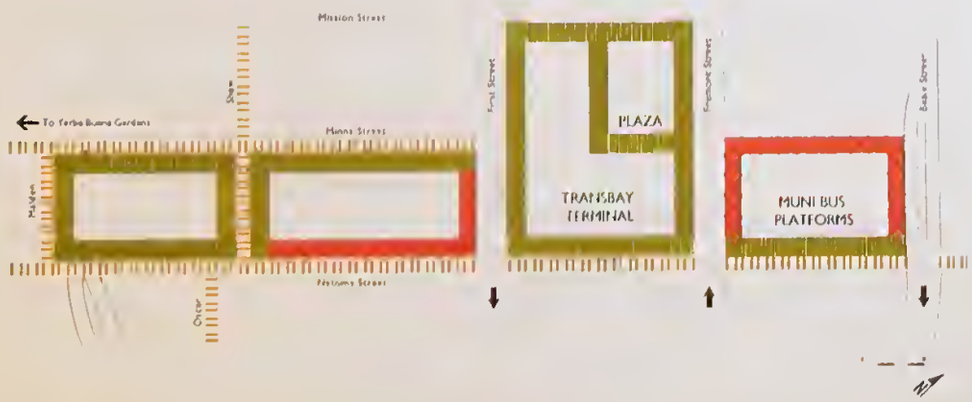
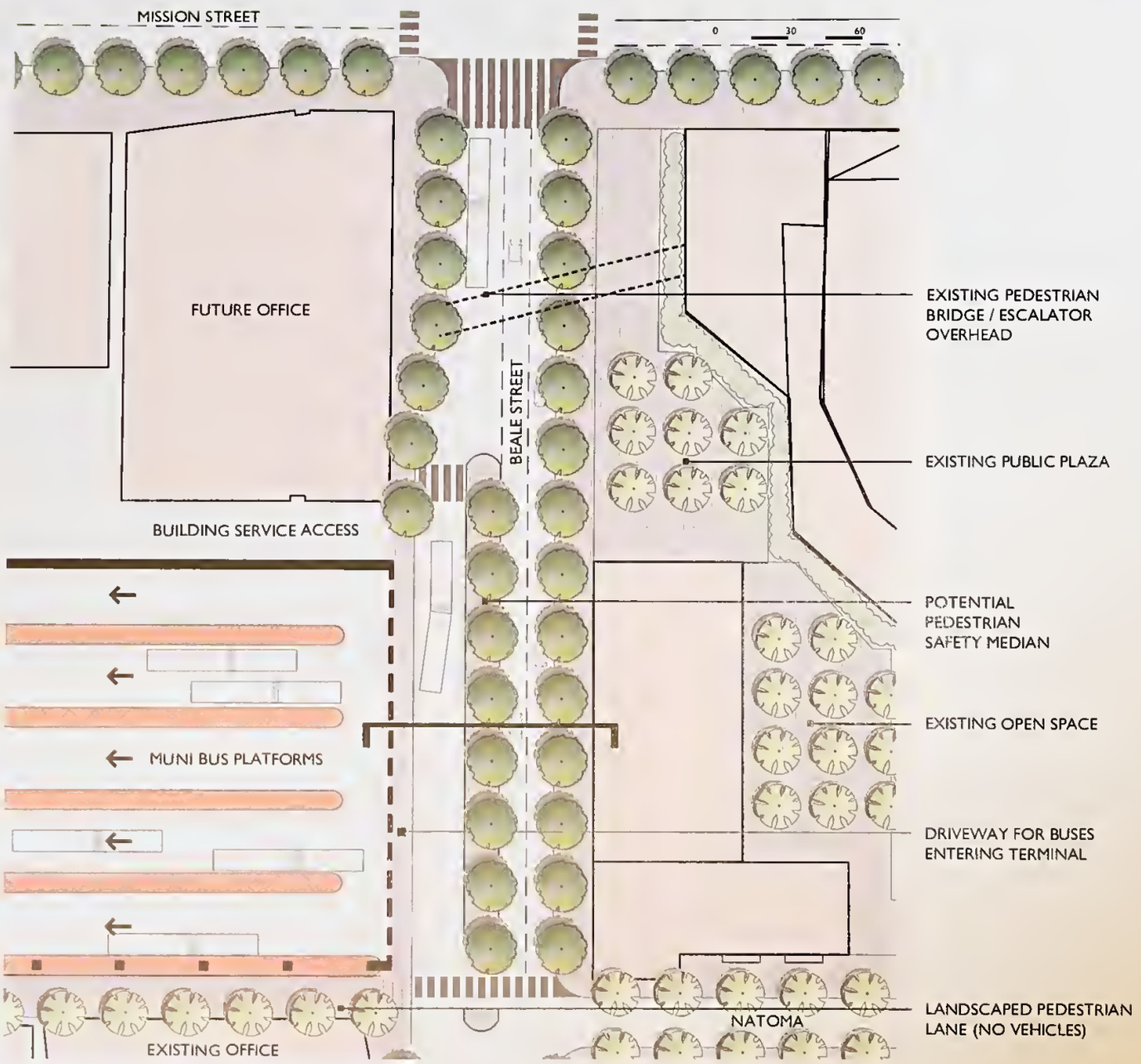




BEALE STREET AT EASTERN EDGE OF TERMINAL PLAN

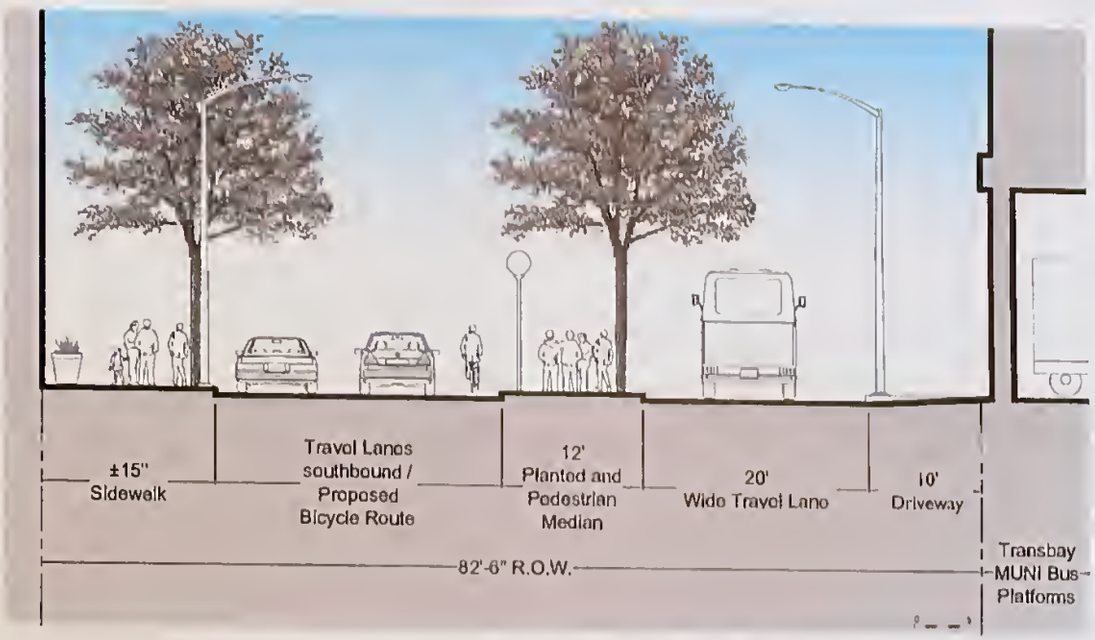


The areas, indicated in red, denote where concentrations of service or bus access will occur. While pedestrian access will be allowed, these areas will be oriented more to this vehicular activity.

The plan and cross-section on Beale Street illustrates a unique condition at the eastern end of the Terminal. At this location, high volumes of bus traffic will be entering the Terminal building from southbound Beale Street. Two lanes of bus movements will be required along this edge, and a nearly continuous driveway will provide entry for these buses. In order to provide a safe refuge and passage for pedestrians desiring to move south past the Terminal on Beale Street, the configuration shows a wide median, accessed by mid-block crosswalks. Two vehicular travel lanes lie to the east of the median.

This configuration allows pedestrians to continue to walk along the eastern end of the Terminal and minimizes potential pedestrian/bus conflicts by clearly directing pedestrians to crosswalks. An alternative approach would be to create a more continuous pedestrian walkway surface, with buses crossing this surface via a driveway curb cut. This approach would make the pedestrian sidewalk seem more continuous and inviting to the walker, but may result in some confusion for bus movement. This condition needs detailed study during the final design of the Terminal. Retaining clear and strong north-south pedestrian movements along Beale Street adjoining the Terminal is very important as this will be a primary access route for the Terminal and for other destinations to the north and south in the Transbay area.

The plan for the block directly across Beale Street from the Terminal shows a new pedestrian plaza adjacent to the existing office building at 201



BEALE STREET AT EASTERN EDGE OF TERMINAL SECTION (looking south)

Mission Street and new development that would be suitable for office space, but could also potentially be developed as housing. The final design for this block specifically, should be developed in cooperation with the owners of the existing office building in order to ensure that the new development and open space is integrated with existing uses. Regardless of its use, the new development must meet the performance standards of the Design for Development, including maintaining view corridors and sunlight to public space.

URBAN FORM

As noted in the Background Chapter, an independent contract to redesign the Terminal will follow the Design for Development. The final design will incorporate the analysis and development concepts exhibited in the MTC Plan, as well as the Design for Development requirements.

Independent of the Design for Development process, the TJPA has made the following changes to the concept design:

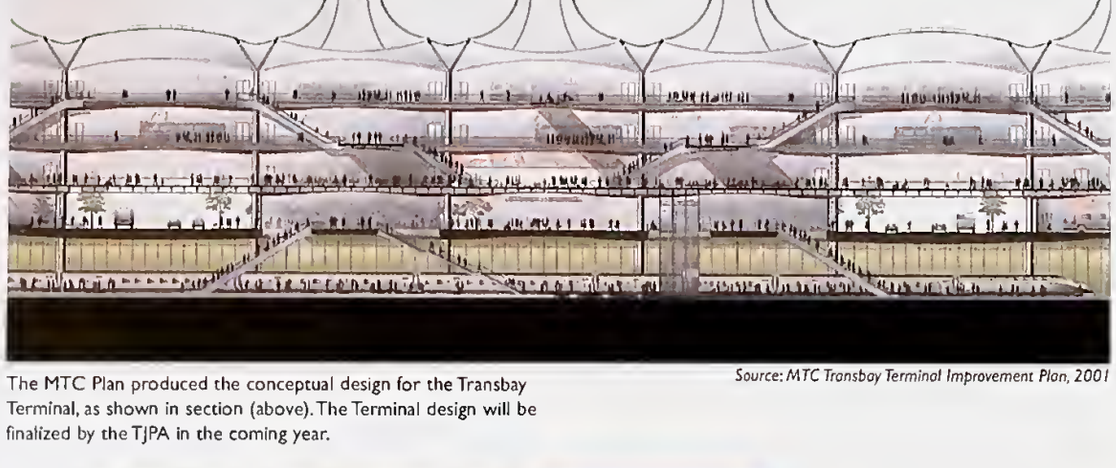
- The Terminal Footprint
- The Terminal Levels

The Terminal Footprint

Rather than span three north-south streets, the Terminal footprint has been shifted west, onto a Natoma Street property that will be acquired for the Caltrans Extension (see adjacent plan). This shift reduces the impact on the Beale Street environment and will leave the parcels, bordered by wide sidewalks on Beale and Main Streets, open for future mixed-use development.

The Terminal Levels

The Terminal will consist of six levels, two of which will be below grade to service rail lines (see the Mission Street Elevation). The Terminal Lobby at ground level will be comprised of easily-accessible transit services, amenities, and convenience retail. Muni service will operate on the ground level between Beale and Fremont Streets. The concourse level will facilitate passenger connections between rail service below and bus service above. AC Transit will operate on the lowest bus level; private carriers will operate on the top level. The Bay Bridge off-ramps will connect directly to these levels.



The MTC Plan produced the conceptual design for the Transbay Terminal, as shown in section (above). The Terminal design will be finalized by the TJPA in the coming year.

Source: MTC Transbay Terminal Improvement Plan, 2001

The new Transbay Terminal footprint, as shown in purple, has shifted west from the original proposal.

The Design for Development Requirements

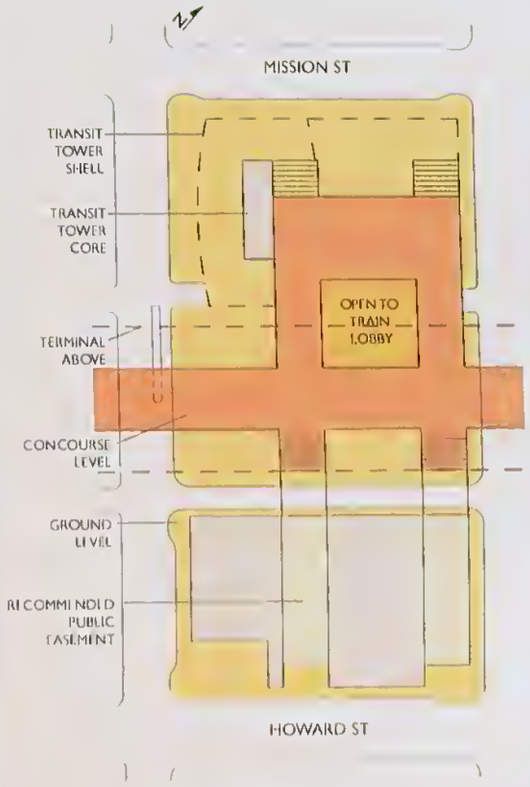
The existing Transbay Terminal sits one block south of Market Street, facing Mission Street with its back to Natoma Street. The new Terminal design should allow for multiple entrances from both north and south to facilitate easy connections to the surrounding area, the Financial District and Rincon Hill. The north entrance along Mission Street will be composed of a grand Plaza and the Transit Tower, housing a hotel, residential units, and possibly office space, depending on future market demands.

The Plaza and ground level of the Transit Tower will be open to public flow from First Street to Fremont Street, providing San Francisco with a new civic landmark in an area that currently lacks any significant public space (see the East/West Section on page 9.9). Though the property south of the Terminal core is entitled for commercial development, its design is encouraged to facilitate mid-block easements to link pedestrians directly to the Terminal Lobby (see Enlarged Terminal Plaza Plan, right).

The Terminal entry Plaza will be open and welcoming to passengers and the public.

The Terminal Hub Urban Design Requirements

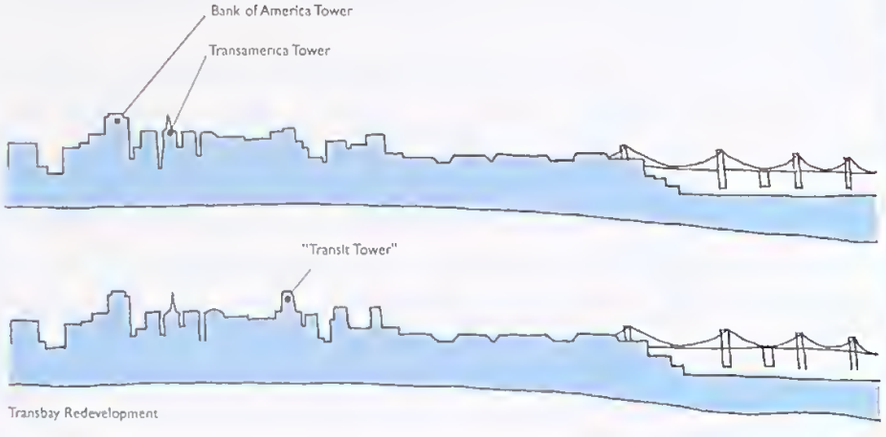
- Ensure that the new Terminal design opens to the north and to the south and is easily accessed by all cross streets.
- Celebrate the multi-modal transit hub with a landmark Transit Tower and Plaza recognizable on the skyline and the ground level.
- Design the entry Plaza to be a visually permeable and welcoming entrance that links the Terminal and adjacent buildings.
- Encourage new buildings on adjacent parcels to include lobby level connections to the new Terminal.
- Encourage outward facing, street level retail in the new Terminal to support pedestrian activity on adjacent streets.
- Consider both an above-ground pedestrian connection and an underground connection to Market Street from the new Terminal to BART/Muni.

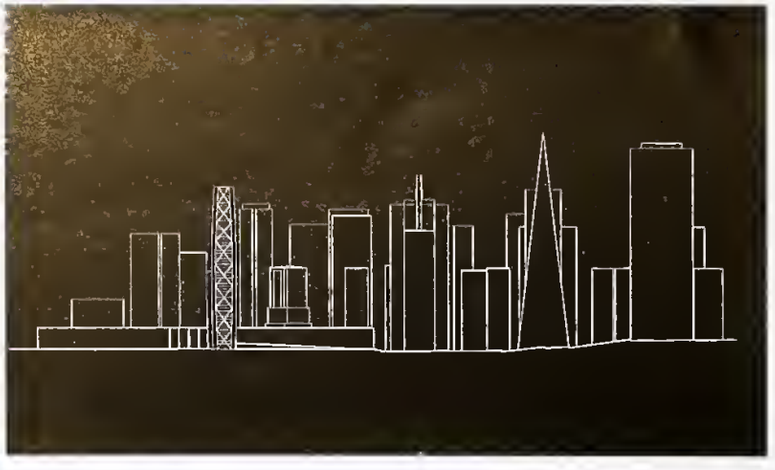


ENLARGED TERMINAL PLAZA PLAN

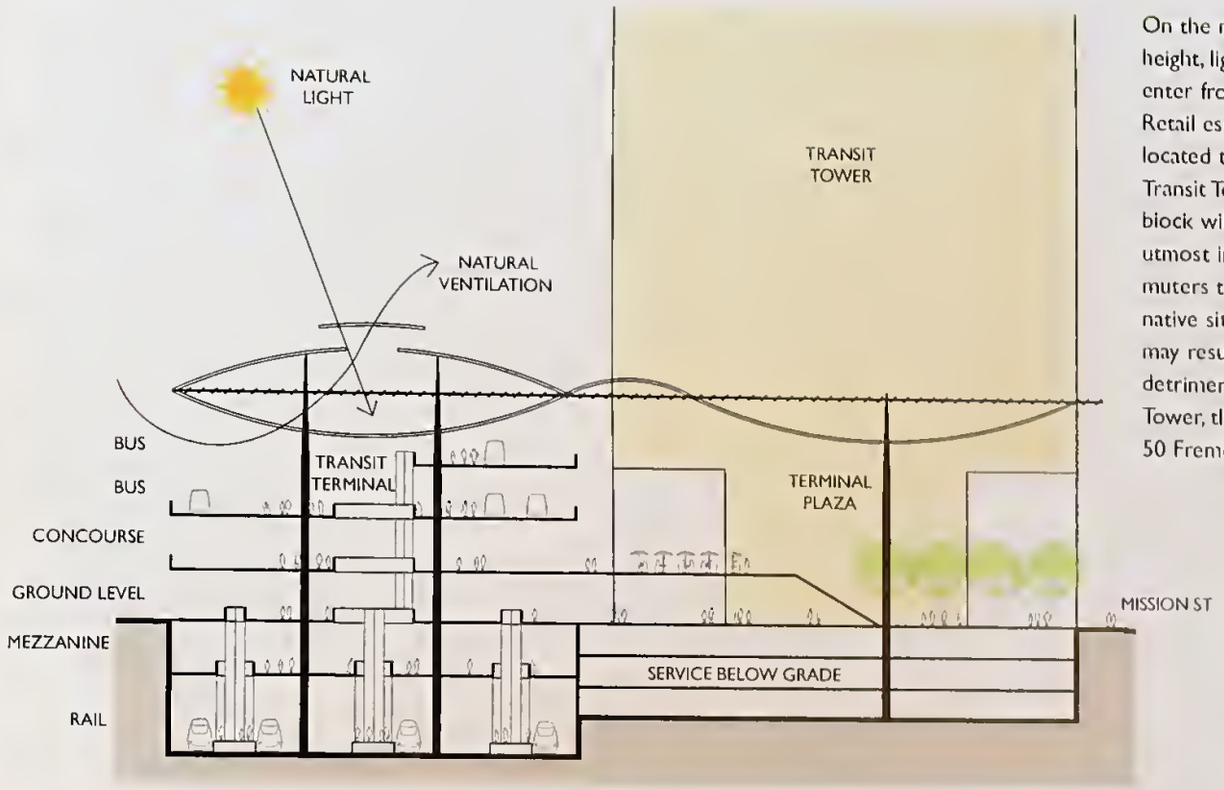
The urban form of downtown San Francisco—a dense "mound" of towers is a compelling one; yet the skyline's tallest and most prominent buildings—the Transamerica Pyramid and Bank of America buildings—lie outside of the downtown core, apart from it. The city would benefit from a new landmark building which will offer a unique addition to the downtown skyline and will mark the hub of unparalleled access to transit. This location is the Transbay Terminal site, and considerations for any development on the Terminal site should strive to build such a landmark tower at the apex of downtown San Francisco. As part of this effort, the city should investigate how best to sculpt this tower to be an icon of the cityscape. Although it is not part of this study, the idea for a much taller signature tower, over 800 feet, was discussed during the public process. This deserves future analysis.

MISSION STREET ELEVATION





In addition to providing easily-accessible hotel accommodations and additional housing for downtown residents, the new Transit Tower can become a new landmark for the city.



EAST/WEST TERMINAL SECTION

On the northern half of the block, the double-height, light-filled Plaza, will greet travelers as they enter from Mission, First, and Fremont streets. Retail establishments and travel amenities will be located throughout this space and the adjacent Transit Tower lobby. The ground level of the entire block will be open to the public, expressing the utmost in ease and facility for workers and commuters traveling to and from the Terminal. An alternative siting that reverses the Tower and the Plaza may result in a brighter plaza, but would be a detriment to the tower seperation between the Tower, the 301 Mission proposal and the existing 50 Fremont.

The future Terminal Plaza will be a light-filled pavilion, unique in structure and open to all. These images exemplify such a space.

The Terminal Plaza opens onto Mission, First, and Fremont Streets and will offer downtown San Francisco a ceremonial entrance and a grand public space.

10 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Transit-First Policy

The following principles shall constitute the City and County's Transit-First policy and shall be incorporated into the General Plan of the City and County. All officers, boards, commissions, and departments shall implement these principles in conducting the City and County's affairs:

1. To ensure quality of life and economic health in San Francisco, the primary objective of the transportation system must be the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.
2. Public transit, including taxis and vanpools, is an economically and environmentally sound alternative to transportation by individual automobiles. Within San Francisco, travel by public transit, by bicycle and on foot must be an attractive alternative to travel by private automobile.
3. Decisions regarding the use of limited public street and sidewalk space shall encourage the use of public rights of way by pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit, and shall strive to reduce traffic and improve public health and safety.
4. Transit priority improvements, such as designated transit lanes and streets, and improved signalization, shall be made to expedite the movement of public transit vehicles (including taxis and van pools) and to improve pedestrian safety.
5. Pedestrian areas shall be enhanced, wherever possible, to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and to encourage travel by foot.
6. Bicycling shall be promoted by encouraging safe streets for riding, convenient access to transit, bicycle lanes, and secure bicycle parking.
7. Parking policies for areas well served by public transit shall be designed to encourage travel by public transit and alternative transportation.
8. New transportation investment should be allocated to meet the demand for public transit generated by new public and private commercial and residential developments.
9. The ability of the City and County to reduce traffic congestion depends on the adequacy of regional public transportation. The City and County shall promote the use of regional mass transit and the continued development of an integrated, reliable, regional public transportation system.
10. The City and County shall encourage innovative solutions to meet public transportation needs wherever possible and where the provision of such service will not adversely affect the service provided by the Municipal Railway. (Added to the City Charter by the Board of Supervisors in November, 1999)

APPENDIX 2

Market Analysis Summary

This section summarizes the current and anticipated future real estate market conditions that will impact the Transbay Redevelopment Area. The Transbay Area's proximity to the Financial District, the waterfront, Yerba Buena Center, and the larger South of Market Area makes it very attractive for a variety of uses. A market analysis by Sedway Group indicates that in the near-term, there is strong demand for housing. A long-term perspective suggests that the Transbay Terminal Area would also be highly suitable for office development as an extension of Financial District South. Retail and hotel development opportunities were also analyzed.

Demographic and Economic Background

San Francisco experienced exceptional population and household growth in the 1990s, adding nearly 53,000 residents and over 24,000 households. Much of this growth occurred in the latter part of the 1990s as a result of the confluence of strong local and regional job markets, the proliferation of new housing (particularly in popular live/work, loft-type developments), and the emergence of San Francisco as a highly desirable "24/7" residential location. Projections for future demographic growth vary. One relatively conservative forecast calls for limited household growth over the period from 2000 through 2025. Another more robust projection indicates a similar amount of growth, but over a far shorter period of time. Given the fact that demographic growth has been historically constrained by supply of new housing, future household growth will depend heavily on the amount of new housing units built.

San Francisco added 55,000 jobs in the 1990s, mostly during the economic recovery and boom of the latter part of the decade. The average annual number of jobs for 2000 was 634,400, up from 579,200 in 1990. Since 2000, employment has dropped as the economy entered into recession. Employment growth is anticipated to commence in 2004. By 2010, San Francisco is projected to reach about 687,000 jobs.

Residential Market

The San Francisco apartment market has been negatively impacted by the recession, as job losses have resulted in tenant move-outs and the loss of corporate rentals. Apartments have also lost tenants to ownership housing opportunities, due to historically low interest rates that have made home ownership much more affordable. At the same time, new supply has been added to the market, and additional units are in the supply pipeline. The 2002 citywide apartment occupancy rate was 94 percent, three percentage points lower than the 97 percent average occupancy rate over the period from 1995 through 2002. Apartment rents, which increased substantially during the late 1990s and in 2000, have declined from the market peak by approximately 30 percent. Nonetheless, average unit rents remain above $1,800 per month in larger apartment complexes.

The condominium market has been relatively strong over the past year, benefiting from historically low interest rates. After prices dropped from the 2000 peak and a period of very slow sales activity in 2001, there has been a sense among buyers that this was a good time to purchase a residence. According to representatives marketing newly constructed condominiums, product that is more affordably priced (e.g., price per square foot less than $500 for most unit types) is selling rather well. Very upscale and luxury units, which are typically priced in excess of $800,000 (or greater than $600 per square foot), are selling more slowly.

Generally favorable market conditions for new residential units over the past eight years have resulted in a substantial potential future supply of product. As of early 2003, Sedway Group estimates over 13,000 units of potential added supply over the next several years. However, Sedway Group also estimates that potential future demand for new housing units over a 20+ year time horizon will outweigh supply, creating a relatively favorable pricing environment for new residential development.

The potential developments in the adjacent Rincon Hill area are particularly important to Transbay. There is the potential for over 3,300 units of future supply in this area, of which only one project, Metropolitan with 345 units, is under construction. Most other projects are seeking entitlement approval. Depending upon the timing of these developments, they could either pose direct competition to the Transbay development or pave the way for greater market acceptance for Transbay. Overall, there are many characteristics that will make Transbay a desirable residential location: proximity to the Financial District, multiple public transit options, access to the freeway system, proximity to the Bay, nearby amenities, and potential for views from upper-floor units. Therefore, from a demand standpoint, Sedway Group believes that Transbay can capture a portion of the overall demand over the 2003 to 2025 period. This capture will likely be more substantial after 2010, due to the extensive infrastructure construction in the area and the increased availability of development sites.

Office Market

The San Francisco office market totals 80.8 million square feet of space, the majority of which, 49.6 million square feet, is located in the City's Financial District. The Financial District is the key office submarket for San Francisco and is the headquarters or regional office location for many national firms. After experiencing particularly strong tenant demand in the 1996 through 2000 period, which caused vacancy rates to plummet and rental rates to spike, the San Francisco office market has deteriorated swiftly and substantially. As of the end of 2002, the overall market's vacancy rate had increased to 18 percent (or 14.8 million vacant square feet). This is the highest vacancy rate since the mid-1980s. The Financial District mirrors the overall market with an 18 percent vacancy rate as well (9.0 million vacant square feet). Accordingly, average asking rents have plummeted from the market peak ($70 to $80 per square foot range) to the current range of $20 to $30 per square foot.

Based on forecasted employment growth for office-using jobs, for current market conditions, and for current construction (assuming that the buildings under construction will be completed and no new buildings will break ground), Sedway Group estimates that the office market vacancy rate will likely decline over the 2003 through 2010 period, perhaps dropping below 10 percent by 2009. Thus, the need for new office construction is not anticipated until 2010. At this time, the Transbay area will be favorably positioned to capture a strong proportion of this demand, as it is part of the Financial District and will have a favorable entitlement process due to its redevelopment status. Part of this capture is also due to the fact that the Transbay area includes six office development sites that have already been approved by redevelopment, with a total of 1.5 million square feet of space.

Hotel Market

The San Francisco hotel market contains 23,360 rooms, with significant clusters located in the areas surrounding the Moscone Convention Center, Union Square, and Fisherman's Wharf. Current hotel market conditions are poor. San Francisco had already experienced a drop in demand from business travelers as a result of the recession that commenced in early 2001. After the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks, leisure and business-related travel continued to decline significantly. The threat of additional attacks and war, along with a struggling economy, has created a very challenging hotel market. The average occupancy rate for 2002 was 65.4 percent, the lowest rate in 23 years. The average daily room rate has declined from the market peak of $170 to $146—slightly higher than the average room rate in 1998.

There are 870 rooms in three projects currently under construction, and another 2,000 rooms are in the planning process. One of the planned hotels is the 400-room Hotel Sofitel on Mission Street, just outside of the Transbay Area. With the pending completion of additional supply, the hotel market is anticipated to deteriorate further in the near term. In the context of the overall hotel market and the supply additions during the past economic cycle, it is likely that the current pipeline of proposed hotels will be placed on hold until market fundamentals significantly improve. It is quite possible that some of these planned rooms will not be built in the next market cycle.

With regard to Transbay, a critical issue is one of location. The Transbay area is not located along the waterfront or a major tourist area, which limits its leisure demand. The Financial District is already served by seven large hotels, three of which are new. The potential demand for a hotel in Transbay will depend upon future growth in the Financial District (which will likely happen in or near Transbay), upon business travel trends, and upon whether or not the planned Hotel Sofitel is constructed. In addition, if high-speed rail is added to the Transbay Terminal as planned, future hotel demand will likely be boosted significantly. Nonetheless, the hotel market will be lagging behind the demand for office buildings, and thus, the supply is not likely to increase during the next market cycle.

Retail Market

San Francisco is well-served by destination retail such as Union Square, Stonestown Galleria, the Metreon and SoMa big box stores. These destination retail locations provide a wide variety of comparison shopping goods. Both Union Square and the SoMa big box have the ability to capture future demand from retail tenants. Thus, the potential for retail in the Transbay Redevelopment Area is primarily limited to convenience retail to serve the office building workers and area residents. Transbay can also capture eating and drinking demand generated by new office workers and residents, as well as customers from outside Transbay. In other words, demand for retail space in Transbay is ancillary and will be derived primarily from the development of new residential and office space.

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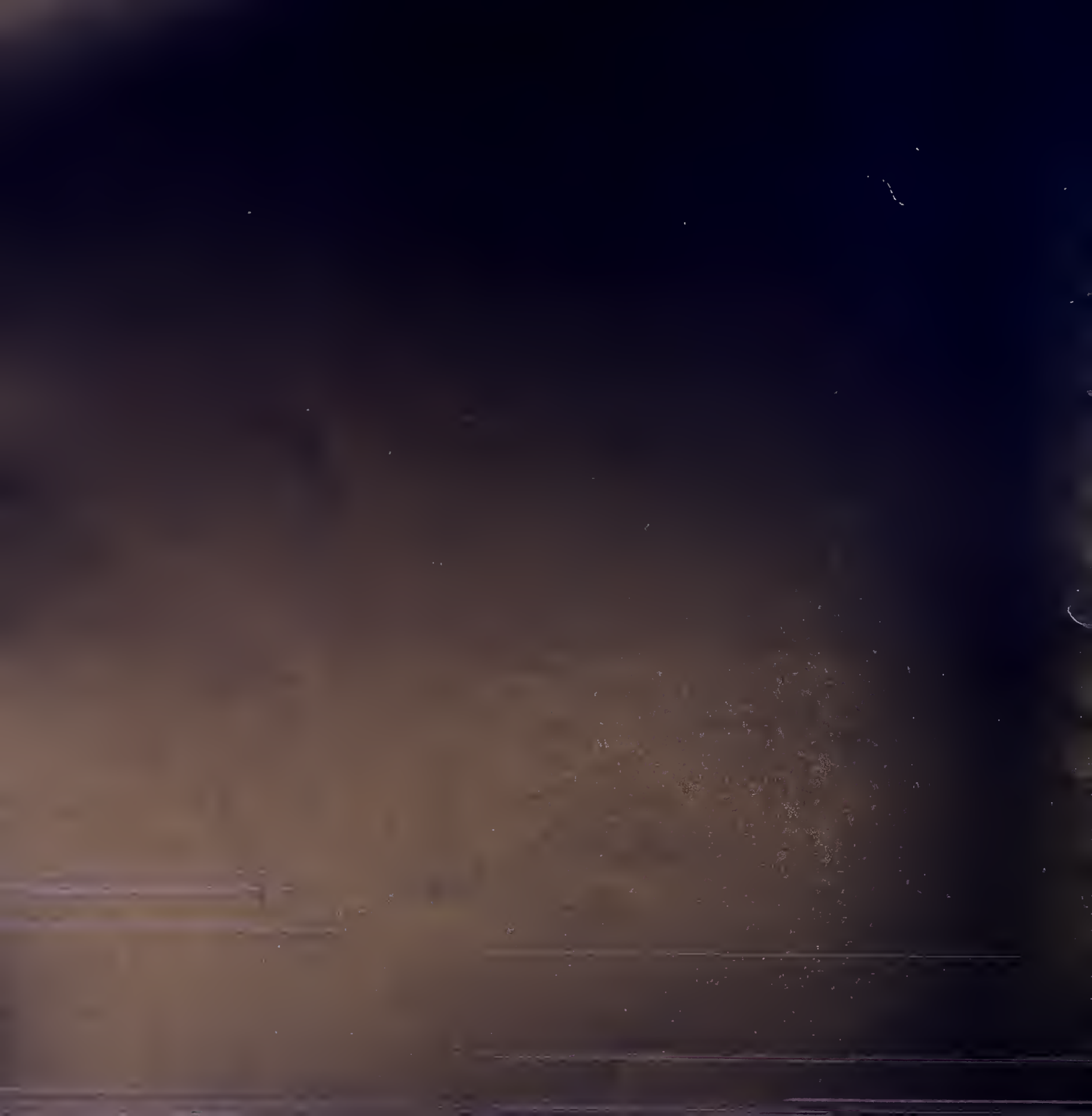
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